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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains 14 papers on residential colleges and their role in successful freshman year experiences. Residential colleges are defined as colleges in which the faculty live among the students. The papers are as follows: (1) "Introduction: Why a Monograph about First-Year Residential Colleges?" by Terry B. Smith; (2) "Residential Colleges: An Historical Context" by Mark B. Ryan; (3) "Us and Them" by Jim Hohenbary and others; (4) "Residential Colleges: Vestige or Model for Improving College Residence Halls?" by Derrell Hart and Terry B. Smith; (5) "Meeting the Needs of Today's Students: The Evolution of A Residential Academic Program" by Terri J. Macey; (6) "Student Life as Text: Discovering Connections, Creating Community" by Grant Cornwell and Richard Guarasci; (7) "Making Connections: The Mission of UNCG's (University of North Carolina Greensboro) Residential College" by Frances Arndt; (8) "Putting the College Back in the University" by Jerry A. Stark; (9) "Outgrow the Place... but Not the Faculty: Introducing Freshmen to Resident Faculty Communities" by Kristine E. Dillon; (10) "'You Save Our Academic Lives'" by Katie Dustin and Chris M. Murchison; (11) "Time Travel in British Higher Education: The Rediscovery of Colleges" by Frank Burnet; (12) "How To Know When It's Working" by Kristie DiGregorio and others; (13) "Amy's College" by Martin Nemko; (14 "Afterword: Three Quotes" by Terry B. Smith. Papers include references. (JB)

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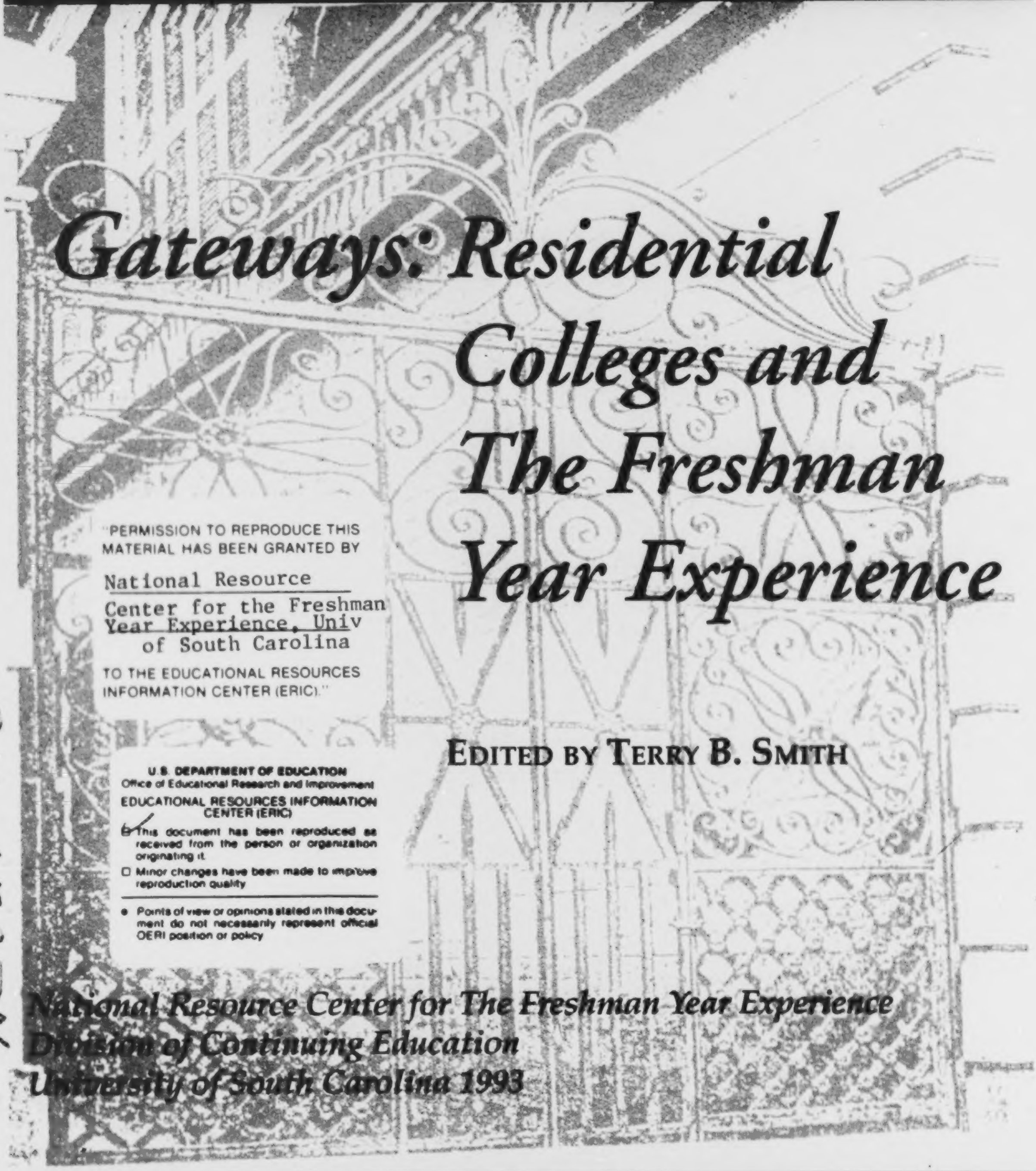

Gateways: Residential Colleges and The Freshman Year Experience

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National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
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Gateways: Residential Colleges and The Freshman Year Experience

EDITED BY TERRY B. SMITH

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Your humble author and servant is certain about few things in this life except this: the monograph doesn't exist but for these dedicated and good people:

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I thank them all.

Terry B. Smith
Editor

Additional copies of this monograph may be ordered at $25 each from the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience, University of South Carolina, 1728 College Street, Columbia, SC 29208. Telephone (803) 777-6029. See order form on last page.

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Foreword

JOHN N. GARDNER

It is with great pleasure and respect that I provide a foreword for this monograph from the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience at the University of South Carolina. I am pleased for us to offer this fine work on the residential college, and I have great respect for the senior editor of this publication, Dr. Terry Smith of Peru State College, and his colleagues represented in this monograph.

In less than three decades educators have accommodated themselves quite remarkably to many new types of students for whom American higher education was never originally designed. As one who entered American higher education as a freshman student more than three decades ago, I have seen us give up many of our traditions such as a curriculum and a co-curriculum explicitly rooted in a number of sexist assumptions, *in loco parentis*, and many other vestiges of earlier times. Unfortunately, I think we have also given up some concepts worth keeping. That clearly is the focus of this particular monograph. The idea of the residential college is hardly a new one in American higher education, dating to our earliest colonial colleges, but nevertheless it is an idea, I believe, whose time has come (again). As I reflect on my own residential college experience, I am aware that some of my most powerful learning experiences occurred in the context of what we used to call "dormitories." Simultaneously, I have very fond memories of the many evenings I spent in the homes of my professors, talking with them, eating with them, and coming to know them and their families better. However, I never had the opportunity to integrate those two concurrent learning contexts: the residence hall experience and interaction with faculty outside of class. The residential college concept would have permitted that. It is certainly not too late for thousands of present and future college students as this monograph so ably suggests.

Readers of the freshman year experience literature, are well aware of the potential of on-campus residence experience for increased student learning, involvement, interaction, satisfaction, retention, and graduation. Similarly, this same literature points to the compelling importance of students having adequate opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction outside of class. The residential college concept provides unique opportunities for all of this to come.

Several years ago I learned of the work of a pioneer in this concept of the residential college, Dr. Terry Smith, then of Northeast Missouri State University who had for many years been developing experience in this concept of residential colleges. Dr. Smith organized and hosted the first conference on the residential college concept. It was at that point, that my colleagues and I in the National Resource Center approached Dr. Smith about providing his thoughts in writing for a wider audience of educators interested in an additional approach to enhancing the freshman year experience. This monograph is the result.

As many of us on America's campuses undergo the extraordinary exchange and turmoil underway in this decade, this may understandably be nostalgia for a simpler past. The colonial concept of the residential college was a long established tradition in American higher education, but the concept of residential colleges again bears re-examination for an appropriate adaptation for the present. I urge you to join me in giving this concept serious consideration for the difference it might make in helping to contribute to a unique campus culture for your residential first-year students. Because the freshman year experience is the foundation of the entire undergraduate experience, this monograph has implications far beyond the first year. We are honored then to add this to our monograph series and we commend these pages to you for serious further thought and application in your own campus setting.

John N. Gardner
Director
National Resource Center for
The Freshman Year Experience
November 1993

Part One:

Going Through

Introduction:

Why a Monograph about First-Year Residential Colleges?

Terry B. Smith

1

This monograph was conceived at the First International Conference for Residential Colleges and Living-Learning Centers on the campus of Northeast Missouri State University in March 1992. The conference was organized for residential college practitioners to find out who each other was and to exchange ideas and practices. Conference participants with first-year-only or first-year-based programs were asked if they would contribute to a publication for the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience. The level of interest and commitment was sufficiently high that almost everyone who volunteered on that day in March 1992 followed through with a chapter.

The high interest level was not a surprise. In July 1991, early on a rainy Vancouver, B.C. morning, at a distant, hard-to-find meeting room at the conference for the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International, in direct competition with a plenary speech by none other than John Gardner, the editor gave a program on residential colleges to a large and energetic audience. Something was going on out there. There was at least an intense curiosity, possibly a search for solutions to some complex problems on residential campuses.

What is a Residential College?

What is a residential college? It is "perhaps the most venerable of arrangements for the collaborative pursuit of scholarly investigation," (Annual Report, 1991, p. 3) emerging from the Islamic world in the eleventh century and migrating to Oxford and Paris in the twelfth (Oakley, 1992, pp. 19-20).

A classical residential college is characterized by one factor: faculty reside among their students. Sometimes "residential college" is used synonymously with "living-learning center," but they are not the same. A living-learning center is a student living space wherein there is academic programming and services such as classes, tutoring, advising, and study skills centers. But the classical residential college requires that faculty *reside* with students.

A classical residential college is characterized by one factor: faculty reside among their students.

Of the colleges and universities in North America identified as having significant academic programming in residential halls, Smith and Raney (1993) count only 26 with faculty residing in student living areas. There are doubtless unreported programs, but even if the number were half again as large (the likely upper limit), the new sum would represent but one percent of all higher education institutions in North America, and all with living-learning arrangements of any kind would represent perhaps five percent. The good news is the trend: well over half the programs have come into existence during the last decade.

Despite the relative rarity of residential colleges, their two great advantages have remained a constant since Medieval times. The educational value of community life and the development of the whole student psyche are the touchstones of the collegiate way, suggests Mark Ryan in Chapter 2 of this monograph on the history of residential colleges in America.

Three recent studies affirm the benefits of communities of integrated living and learning. Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt (1991) praise campuses on which in-class and out-of-class experiences are systematically melded. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) go further when they aver that "the most consistent evidence linking residence with specific kinds of change points to the greater impact of those halls in which there are systematic and purposeful efforts to integrate students' academic and social lives (e.g., in living-learning centers) in ways that extend and reinforce learning in other areas" (p. 653). Schroeder and Mabel (in press) focus on the variety of ways in which academics may be pursued in the residential setting (Smith, in press).

American residential colleges have a distinguished lineage and are a hybrid of the British free-standing college and the dormitory on the large, centralized American university.

So on one hand we have the documented benefits to students of residential college/living-learning environments. On the other, we have the abundantly documented benefits of programs targeted to first-year students. It is a natural next step to learn what happens at those institutions that have residential college/living-learning programs with first-year students as theprimary clientele. It is a natural next step to examine *Gateways: Residential Colleges and the Freshman Year Experience.*

The Organization of this Monograph

In this monograph, as with any multi-author publication, authors have been solicited and the chapters they have written are ordered with care. This subject, residential colleges, is new to some readers and controversial to others; a full explication of the spectrum of and the issues raised by residential colleges is in order.

Faithful to the "gateway" theme, Part One is entitled *Going Through.* Following the introduction is Chapter 2, Mark Ryan's "Residential Colleges: An Historical Context." While Ryan does not deal expressly with the first-year experience, his historical background is critical context. Based on his plenary address to the First Residential College Conference, the chapter (which first appeared in a slightly different form in *Change* in September 1992) is the formal debut (perhaps more accurately renaissance) of residential colleges as a national higher education agenda item. American residential colleges have a distinguished-lineage and are a hybrid of the British free-standing college and the dormitory on the large, centralized American university. Ryan notes that the evolution of American higher education has been carried forward by the debate that centers on the suitability of the collegiate way to peculiarly American needs and traits.

Chapter 3, "Us and Them," ushers us into the subject from a dramatically different perspective, that of the first-year student herself. Four Northeast Missouri State University undergraduates (James Hohenbary, R. Andrew Bryan, Mitchell B. Cross, and Laura Starr Cruse) entreat us to see a residential college experience from the point of view of the typical new student only months out of high school. They see the necessity of neutralizing the high school mindset if the first-year experience is to realize its potential, and they suggest a number of ways in which residential colleges are uniquely positioned to accomplish this task: a positive contact environment, programming, and curriculum. Drawing on their experiences as Peer Advisors in Northeast Missouri's residential colleges, they offer the valuable insight that, for first-year students, "integration needs to proceed from living to learning, not the other way around." New students must be exposed to programs that "bridge to thêir academic environment without feeling overdosed on education. The key is relevance."

In Chapter 4, "Residential Colleges: Vestige or Model for Improving College Residence Halls?," Derrell Hart and Terry Smith explore the challenges to residential colleges raised by faculty and student affairs/residence life staff. Current educational and financial trends tend to test colleges' viability on many campuses where they exist and their case on those campuses where they are proposed. Many faculty see them as "housing stuff;" many residence life staff see them as "untrained faculty horning in." Even students living in the colleges too often fail to see the benefits of the experience. Nonetheless, residential colleges offer a "framework for residential living programs that strive to support student success in college . . . and student academic success is the highest priority." Furthermore, "opportunities to link academic and student life are especially rich" during the student's first year.

Part Two, entitled *Being There*, begins with Chapter 5, the first to highlight a campus-based program. In "Meeting the Needs of Today's Students: The Evolution of a Residential Academic Program," Terri Macey reminds us of the dramatic changes in new student populations since Colorado's residential college was founded in 1970. Goals have become more vocational, and entering students are less prepared and more diverse. Should Colorado's residential college change to accommodate new needs and mandates? Could it? The answers are "yes" and "yes," and Macey describes a college that moved a curricular and programmatic focus in order to stay on the cutting edge of Colorado's campus.

Chapters 6 through 8 describe curriculum-based residential colleges for new students. In "Student Life as Text," Grant Cornwell and Richard Guarasci write a philosophical, yet highly accessible, description of St. Lawrence University's First-year Program residential colleges. Based on "common interdisciplinary team-taught, core courses thematically structured to inquire into certain enduring questions of human experience," the colleges stretch and challenge faculty, students, and staff. The false dualism of the academic affairs/student affairs dichotomy is exposed; the excesses of hyper-specialization and the "irony of expertise" are revealed; and the pleas of the student authors who wrote about ways to remedy student alienation in the earlier chapter, "Us and Them," are affirmed. Cornwell and Guarasci also laud the multicultural benefits that accrue from the college experience.

In Chapter 7, "Making Connections: The Mission of UNCG's Residential College," Frances Arndt underscores the importance of the four-semester course foundation to the University of North Carolina-Greensboro's small residential college. Radiating outward from the core class, the spreading connections encompass other courses, service-learning, and co-curricular activities, making venturing forth into the larger institution a safer endeavor. Faculty and staff from large state schools may heed the lessons herein.

Chapter 8, "Putting the College Back into the University," describes the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh's University Learning Community. Jerry Stark first analyzes the four types of first-year programs and suggests that the context and curricular-centered model is closest to the classical residential college. Funded by FIPSE, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh created a college in 1987 and tracked its students. Stark finds they have more academic involvement and satisfaction, lower initial grades (they were less well-prepared academically), but more credits and higher retention than the control group.

In Chapter 9, "Outgrow the Place . . . but Not the Faculty: Introducing USC's Freshman to Resident Faculty Communities," Kristine Dillon describes a program that exists on a strongly social-Greek campus. Many practitioners aver that the communities that compete with colleges most effectively for new-student loyalties are fraternities and sororities. University of Southern California not only competes but is actually proposing to move resident faculty advisors into Greek houses.

Chapter 10, "You Save Our Academic Lives: The Residential Learning Project at the University of California at Berkeley," is about a complex and successful living-learning program. Katie Dustin and Chris Murchison describe the tremendous pressures on new students at their large, diverse, world-class university and the obligation residential living staff feel to provide academic support. The Residential Learning Project at Berkeley offers a vast array of academic services to hundreds of residents: tutoring, computers, advising, courses/seminars/workshops, and faculty involvement programs. For campuses contemplating programs without faculty in residence, UC-B offers an unusually sophisticated model.

Chapter 11, "Time Travel in British Higher Education," is suffused with wonderful irony. Frank Burnet, Master of Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury plans to reorient the mission of his college toward part-time and mature (non-traditional) students. As Americans rediscover the virtues of the Medieval English College idea, this Englishman (actually he's a Scot) intends to adopt a distinctly American form—an academic community targeted at entering students who are neither full-time nor late teenagers. Before he elucidates his model, however, he gives a delightful overview of how the University of Kent came to be and in so doing sets forth the debate that has raged for two centuries about "Whither Higher Education in Britain?" .

Part Three, entitled *Looking Back*, includes three chapters that are retrospective in tone. Chapter 12, "How to Know if It's Working," by Carl Trindle, Kristie DiGregorio, and Mary Macmanus Ramsbottom, offers an ambitious and highly literary model for residential college evaluation. The authors make dozens of suggestions for making the most of the evaluation of your program that you will inevitably conduct, focusing on the critical turf-and-connection issues that arise when faculty and staff must cooperate to make the enterprise go. On another level, however, they outline a philosophy of program evaluation that applies to examination of higher education activities at all levels. This trio is good at its work, both as evaluators and as givers of good advice about the evaluation process itself.

Chapter 13, "Amy's College," by Marty Nemko tells about the residential college he would want his daughter, Amy, and college students everywhere, to live in. Insightful, visionary, warm, and intimate, he gives us all a college model to strive for. But he goes further: he puts colleges into the context of troubling trends in higher education and walks us through more general and radical reforms that would enormously benefit the condition of new students everywhere.

The monograph concludes with Chapter 14, some paragraphs by the editor that are wrapped around three insightful quotes: one by a politico, the second by a colleague, and the third by the editor's daughter. All have given meaning and direction to his work as a residential college administrator.

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Residential Colleges: An Historical Context

MARK B. RYAN

2

Permit me to begin, for the sport of it, with one Harvard man bashing another. Here is Charles Francis Adams, writing in 1909 to Woodrow Wilson, then President of Princeton, looking back on the 40-year reign in Cambridge of Charles William Eliot, the president who not only remade Adams's alma mater but launched American higher education into a new era: "I consider that Eliot has, by his course and influence, done as much harm to the American college as he has done good to the American university" (Veysey, 1970, p. 250).

Adams's brotherly barb came at what, for our purposes, was a crucial historical moment, when the values of the old American residential college were reviving in the prestigious institutions of the East, after 40 years of erosion during the movement, epitomized by Eliot, to build the great American university. Soon would begin the effort to reestablish the residential college, with its educational purposes and values, within the context of the newly-built and more broadly-defined university. That polarity in Adams's statement, between "college" and "university," would be a confusion to most of the American public. But my purpose is to reflect on the historical roots and educational meaning of that polarity and to advance a few thoughts about what this might mean to universities today. Adams's forebears, the Puritan magistrates who founded his alma mater, may have named that miserable little burg where they put their school, rather grandiosely, after the great English university that several of them had attended. But the model for the school that they had in mind was not the multifarious collection of institutions by the River Cam, but one of the units within it, which they called a "college." The colleges they had known—Emmanuel, Trinity, Christ's—had grown up out of the medieval universities, first as mere boarding houses, then gradually gaining ascendancy as the centers of teaching and learning. The early universities of Europe provided no lodging—but students clearly required it, and benefactors, especially in England, saw

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a need for structured social institutions to provide for young scholars both in body and soul.

Perhaps the earliest was Merton of Oxford, founded in 1264 by the Bishop of Rochester to take care of the "temporalities," as he said, of students—and perhaps not incidentally, to assure the good behavior and proper development of his nephews. The buildings of Merton were grouped around a chapel, where students worshipped daily its statutes, establishing the seminal "Rule of Merton," prescribing diligence, sobriety, chastity, and other personal virtues.

Merton and its early imitators were not teaching institutions, but with the founding of New College, Oxford in 1379, older fellows of the College began instructing younger ones; and by the middle of the next century, the teaching functions at Oxford and Cambridge lay almost entirely in the hands of College lecturers (Morison, 1935, pp. 35-39). Unlike the university, the colleges governed student life beyond instruction; they attempted, we might say, to manage a student's full development.

American higher education was concerned not only with training of minds but also with the molding of character, and the "Collegiate Way of Living," with its common residence, structured community life, shared intellectual interchange, and spiritual purpose and practices, was the path to those complementary goals.

That was the mode that the magistrates of Massachusetts Bay had in mind when they set out to build an institution "to advance learning," as they put it, "and perpetuate it to posterity." Some of the more practically-minded observers suggested that the school, after the manner of universities in, for example, the Netherlands, simply hire ministers to read lectures, leaving the students to fend otherwise for themselves. But as Cotton Mather later retorted, "the government of New England was for having their students brought up in a more Collegiate Way of Living" (Morison, 1935, pp. 251-252). From that beginning in Massachusetts Bay, American higher education was concerned not only with training of minds but also with the molding of character, and the "Collegiate Way of Living," with its common residence, structured community life, shared intellectual interchange, and spiritual purpose and practices, was the path to those complementary goals.

To support the "Collegiate Way," the early colonial institutions—reflecting their passion for this ideal—erected the largest buildings in the English colonies: Old and New Colleges at Harvard, the Wren Building at William and Mary, Nassau Hall at Princeton (Turner, 1984, p. 17). In those ambitious structures were a hall for lectures and dining, a kitchen, a buttery, a library, and chambers for students and tutors. In those halls and rooms, students heard lectures together; they demonstrated their mastery of ideas through recitations and disputations with one another. They followed a rigorous daily discipline of prayers and study, meals and recreation—and in their intellectual and personal development, pursued for four years in close community, they formed lifetime bonds with one another.

Mind you, not everyone in the colonies was pleased with the results. In 1703, the minister Solomon Stoddard attacked Harvard, as some might still, as a place of "riot and pride . . . profuseness and prodigality," and a couple of years later the London agent for Massachusetts and Connecticut complained that they are "bringing up a strange generation there" (Warch, 1973, pp. 18, 59). The agent threw his support to the new, rival school in Connecticut—but there, and in succeeding institutions founded in colonial times, and in the rash of college-building in the early 19th century, founders still chose to bring up new generations in the Collegiate Way.

Perhaps the most notable formal defense of this collegiate ideal, at least prior to the Civil War, emanated from that place in Connecticut which originally had been called "the Collegiate School." This was the seminal "Yale Report of 1828." The focus of that report was curricular; it defended the classical curriculum—the study of what was called "the dead languages" and mathematics—as well as a prescribed, common study of other subjects chosen by the faculty. But it also defended the close community and residential arrangements of the traditional American college. The young students of that era needed, in the words of the report, "a substitute . . . for parental superintendence . . . founded on mutual affection and confidence" between students and their teachers. "The parental character of college government," the report stated, "requires that students should be so collected together, as to constitute one family; that the intercourse between them and their instructors may be frequent and familiar."

The residential ideal was reinforced by an American habit of placing these schools in rural settings, away from the temptations of the cities, where other residential arrangements would have been available.

That goal, the report noted, required suitable residential structures and resident faculty who knew the students through lectures—what the report called the "furniture" of the mind—but also for the "daily and vigorous exercise" of what it called the "mental faculties," on which it based its educational psychology. The intellectual exchange in the community, then made formal with daily recitations and disputations, was a crucial pedagogical tool. The aim of all of this—both curriculum and college life—was "to lay the foundation of a superior education" and, as the report stated, to "produce a proper symmetry and balance of character" (Committee, 1830).

Take note here that over two centuries the rationale for the residential college had moved from one that was primarily spiritual—protecting the moral welfare of the students—to one that was more psychological—encouraging students' full human development, both intellectual and personal. The rationale remained, as before, student-centered, but it was grounded now less in a theological understanding of human nature than in human psychology as it was then understood. Educators of that era found this rationale convincing. Graduates of these institutions in the East set out to found colleges across America, until by the eve of the Civil War there were some 250 of them, many aspiring to the educational ideals of the Yale Report. The residential ideal was reinforced by an American habit of placing these schools in rural settings, away from the temptations of the cities, where other residential arrangements would have been available—often in towns with names such as "Athens" and "Oxford."

Nevertheless, this collegiate ideal, as expressed in the Report, had a fundamental weakness. From the beginning, it had been associated with a common curriculum and even a unitary view of knowledge. That curriculum was derived from the early Renaissance reconciliation of classical learning with medieval Christian theology, in which every intellectual endeavor had its place in a larger framework. The intellectual history of American higher education can be viewed as a progressive breakdown of that unitary view of knowledge, under the pressure of secularization, new perspectives, and new fields of inquiry.

By the time of the Yale Report, that process had begun to tear at the very structure of the American college. The explosion of new knowledge from Europe, especially in the sciences, had begun to crowd the curriculum, making it seem cursory, or to antiquate it, making it seem irrelevant. Democratic, newly industrializing America wanted more practical, vocational subjects; and an educational elite, looking at the intellectual advances of Europe, called for the study of modern languages, political economy, and the blossoming diversity of natural sciences. Such subjects could be incorporated only if students could choose from among various course offerings.

With the attack on a common curriculum often came an attack on the close-knit community life associated with it. Reformers such as Francis Wayland, President of Brown, took as their model not the old English colleges but the very different, nonresidential universities of Germany, with their emphasis on independent and graduate study and on faculty research. Wayland called for the study of new subjects, an elective system, professional and vocational study, and—striking at the heart of the old college—for the abolition of residences and of the college's role in parental superintendence. Without the burden of residences, he argued, the school could devote its resources to academic purposes, to professorships and libraries—with the added benefit that students might not so readily lead each other to moral perdition (a point that some of us who live among them must, I'm sure, from time to time entertain) (Wayland, 1842, pp. 112-131).

These thoughts did not bear fruit until the flowering of the university movement after the Civil War, funded by the new wealth of American industrialism. By the 1870s, great public universities and land-grant colleges had begun to rise up in the Midwest, built to accommodate a much-expanded university population and a more service-oriented, utilitarian curriculum. Johns Hopkins was founded as a graduate research institution on the non-residential German model, and, fortified by an elective curricular system, greatly expanded universities began to emerge out of some of the old colleges. Frequently, these creations and expansions entailed the abandonment not only of a prescribed curriculum, but of chapel, community rules, and dormitories.

Surely the great spokesman for the expansion of the old American college into the new American university was Charles Eliot of Harvard, who assumed his post as president in 1869 and kept it through the first decade of this century. At the heart of Eliot's reform was the elective system—free choice from a wide range of course offerings. He built his case on a radical individualism—because students were not uniform, he argued, neither should be the curriculum. It must not only change with new knowledge and social conditions, but it must allow for wide variation in students' tastes and talents—for, as he put it, vast "diversities of . . . minds and characters." Eliot was a pluralist; he wanted a large student body studying widely varied fields and drawn, he said, from "different nations, states, schools, families, sects, parties, and conditions of life." In part, this was so that students could educate each other about their various backgrounds. But his more compelling reasons for the elective system and a large student body were institutional; they concerned the faculty he wanted to cultivate. Without a great many students, "numerous courses of highly specialized instruction will find no hearers." Electives and a large student body freed the faculty to concentrate on areas of specialization. They were the necessary conditions of what Charles Eliot defined as a university (Eliot, 1898, pp. 125-148).

For Eliot, building the university implied deemphasizing the residential nature of the American college and its supervision of student life. A large university could not, as he phrased it, seclude students "behind walls and bars." He favored urban campuses, with many students living in the city. If the sense of the college as a close community suffered in the process, then so be it; community was not his goal (Eliot, 1898, p. 147; Veysey, 1970, p. 93).

In terms of future definition of American higher education, Eliot prevailed. The university ideal triumphed—and of course not only at Harvard. New fields of inquiry and legions of new students were accommodated in expanding institutions all over the country—including even more traditional places such as Princeton and Yale, where initially

Eliot's ideas had been viewed with rank horror. As Eliot noted, "The manners and customs of the Yale faculty are those of a porcupine on the defensive" (Veysey, 1970, p. 50). In one of the more vitriolic debates among American college presidents, Noah Porter of Yale and James McCosh of Princeton attacked Eliot's university pretensions, defending prescribed study and the supervision and moral guidance of students in residential halls. Referring to the relinquishing of institutional control over students' behavior and course of study, McCosh fumed, ". . . if we cannot avert the evil at Harvard, we may arrest it in the other colleges of the country" (McCosh, 1885, p. 23; Porter, 1890). But even at his and Porter's own institutions, electives took over more and more of the curriculum, and a smaller proportion of resources went into the building of dormitories. The residential, collegiate ideal was clearly in retreat.

During the first decade of this century, however, a backlash took hold: many—such as Charles Francis Adams—were not enamored with increased specialization, with the focus on research rather than on teaching and on graduate and professional schools instead of undergraduate education. They had profound reservations about an unstructured undergraduate curriculum, about the laissez-faire attitude toward student morals and character, and about the separation of intellect from other aspects of development. The collegiate ideal began to revive within the new university.

A leading figure in that revival was Woodrow Wilson of Princeton. As university president, he spoke of the need to join "intellectual and spiritual life" and to "awaken the whole man." Princeton, he said, was "not a place where a lad finds a profession, but a place where he finds himself." Wilson moved Princeton away from the free elective system back towards a more structured curriculum; and with the construction of residences, he attempted to rebuild the sense of community that he thought the university had lost. "The ideal college...," he said, "should be a community, a place of close, natural intimate association, not only of the young men . . . but also of young men with older men . . . of teachers with pupils, outside of the classroom as well as inside of it" (Veysey, 1970, pp. 212, 242, 243). For architectural inspiration, Wilson looked back, once again, to the English residential colleges with their closed quadrangles. He hired Ralph Adams Cram, preeminent spokesman for the revival of the English Gothic style, as Princeton's supervising architect. Wilson hoped, in fact, to create an entire system of residential quadrangles, each with a dining hall, common rooms, and a resident master. His notions culminated in the design and construction of the graduate college, but Wilson failed to win support for his larger vision (Pierson, 1955, p. 224; Turner, 1984, pp. 227-234).

In the later 1920s, Alexander Meiklejohn created a short-lived undergraduate residential college at the University of Wisconsin. Designed as a two-year program of general education, his Experimental College housed faculty offices with student bedrooms in an attempt to create "a community of liberal learning" (Rudolph, 1968, pp. 477-478; Meiklejohn, 1928). But the fulfillment of Wilson's vision for a lasting and comprehensive system of residential quadrangles took place neither at Princeton or Wisconsin; it awaited the philanthropy of Edward S. Harkness, Yale Class of '97, who in 1926 proposed to fund such a system at his alma mater. Yale was slow to respond with a plan, and the delay tried the patience of the donor who began to feel that Harvard might prove more fertile ground for his generosity. By that time, Eliot's notions were in retreat in Cambridge. His successor, A. Lawrence Lowell, ally of Charles Francis Adams and admirer of Wilson, steered Harvard back to collegiate ideals with fewer electives, an emphasis on undergraduate teaching and what he called "cultural and spiritual values," and efforts to create a more closely knit community life. Harkness made the same proposal to Lowell, who snapped it up—calling it "a bolt from the blue." After the announcement, a Yale undergraduate magazine referred to the scheme as "a Princeton plan being tried out at Harvard with Yale money." Harkness then reconciled with his alma mater and agreed to fund what was called the "Quadrangle Plan" at both schools (Pierson, 1955, pp. 207-252).

Both of these institutions then mustered their considerable talents toward what must be viewed as one of the great enterprises in the history of American higher education—the creation of a collegiate unit within the modern university and, through that, the joining of collegiate and university ideals. Officials from Harvard and Yale went scurrying across the Atlantic to examine the "Oxbridge" colleges on which their new units are supposedly to be modeled. But what they needed to build, of course, was something quite different. The British colleges were autonomous sovereignties, self-governing and independently financed agents of instruction with their own faculties. The American units, grafted on to an existing, centralized university, would be something new, something between a British college and an American dormitory.

[O]ne of the great enterprises in the history of American higher education [was] the creation of a collegiate unit within the modern university and, through that, the joining of collegiate and university ideals.

Thus began the enterprise to which today's residential colleges are the heirs. The initial phase, I believe, was a moment of inspired creativity. In fashioning these units, the planners at Harvard and Yale faced, without American precedent—and with great care and resources—the fundamental issues shaping discussions today: issues such as the optimal size of these units; their staffing; the functions of their officers; their architectural configurations; forms of faculty involvement; their educational as well as social functions; their relation to existing units of authority, especially departments of study; their relation to the "extracurriculum;" the forms of their student governance; and even such symbolic concerns as names, titles and heraldry (Pierson, 1955, pp. 400-474). Since that time, Rice University and the University of California at Santa Cruz have constructed comprehensive systems of four-year colleges patterned largely after those at Harvard and Yale in which all students are enrolled. Princeton—where in its modern version the notion, in a sense, began—has created a system of two-year colleges that may yet expand to four. In the economically flush years of the 1960s, universities such as Michigan State introduced residential colleges, often with an academic focus, as one among various housing options available to students. More recently, a diverse array of universities, including the University of Pennsylvania, University of Virginia, St. Lawrence University, Northwestern University, University of Southern California, University of Colorado, and Northeast Missouri State University, among others, have created "pure" residential colleges; i.e., facilities with faculty at least semi-permanently in residence.

Looking over this broad history of the collegiate tradition, we see two basic characteristics: that tradition accepts the educational value of community life, and it strives to develop the whole student psyche. In interpreting that legacy for our purposes, of course, we accept the enduring elements of university ideal. From Eliot's day onwards, the American university would be devoted to the advancement as well as the perpetuation of learning; it would have a faculty focused on areas of specialization. It would accept the reality that students come with vast diversities of minds and characters, requiring wide range in choice of study. It would draw its students from ever more pluralistic backgrounds—from, in Eliot's terms, "different nations. . . , families, sects . . . , and conditions of life."

But within that context, the residential college aims to promote the enduring elements of what Cotton Mather called "the Collegiate Way of Living." In promoting cohesive communities within the university, the collegiate ideal embraces the principle that informal contact in structured community life is a significant element in the learning process—contact between students and instructors and among students themselves. We attempt to give meaning to the old ideal of mentorship, recognizing the value of what the Yale Report called "mutual affection and confidence" or "frequent and familiar intercourse" between students and faculty. Some modern commentators point with passion to that need. As Page Smith puts it, "there is no decent, adequate, respectable education, in the proper sense of that much-abused word, without personal involvement by a teacher with the needs and concerns, academic and personal, of his/her students" (Smith, 1990, p. 7). This implies that a residential college should provide for a strong faculty presence—for formal and informal avenues of advising and counseling, of listening and affirmation.

The collegiate ideal also accepts the principle that students educate each other fully as much as they are educated by the faculty. They may absorb information in the classroom, but it is in exchanges with one another that students internalize that information, take the measure of what rings true, relate it to their experience and intuitions, and assess how it has meaning in their lives. Further, in their diverse backgrounds, tastes, experiences, and perspectives, they expose one another to sometimes infectious insights and interests, to rich, if sometimes painful, personal histories and experiences. The educational value of that exposure argues for college communities that reflect the full social diversity of the university population.

The second enduring element in the collegiate ideal is that it attempts to look after the whole student psyche, to promote the development of character as well as intellect. That is a persistent theme, from the Yale Report's psychological portrait of the student to Woodrow Wilson's concern that a Princeton student find not a profession but himself. The college must seek to create an atmosphere in which students are supported in their full personal growth. The college community supports that growth by serving as witness to it, by appreciating it, by providing a forum in which all student concerns, especially personal and developmental ones, can be given a full hearing. For college officers, this implies, I think, that what we might call human sensitivity is every bit as important a credential as scholarly achievement. College officers should be skilled as personal counselors, and they have an obligation to familiarize themselves with the major issues of personal development in the college years.

A traditional element in this focus on character in the collegiate ideal, from the founding of Merton College, is an emphasis on values we call moral and spiritual. Obviously, that does not mean for us what it meant for Cotton Mather, but the terms crop up in the whole history of the Collegiate Way, through the rhetoric of Woodrow Wilson and Lawrence Lowell. Their meaning, for us, I would say, is twofold: it lies in community ethics and in personal awareness. Ethical concern should be at the heart of the college's community life. In their interactions with each other, in the creation and enforcement of college regulations, students must constantly be encouraged to look to the community's harmony and welfare and to consider how the virtues and values that thus come to play are expressed—or not expressed—in the larger society.

The college must seek to create an atmosphere in which students are supported in their full personal growth.

As for the spiritual element, perhaps colleges in the modern secular university must be content to let it emerge from the bonds of affection formed in the group—and to encourage a place for inner, personal exploration. If the concerns that we call spiritual are rooted, as I believe they are, in compassion—in the cultivation of sincerity, mutual acceptance, even love—then they can be nourished in the ties and mutual understanding formed in college life. To make the most of that opportunity for spiritual growth, colleges must, I believe, find ways to encourage in students a deepening awareness of personal experience, of what Vaclav Havel has recently called "trust in [one's] own subjectivity as a principal link with the subjectivity of the world" (Havel, 1992). Through that, they can encourage some attention to the life cycle, some concern for the largest context of human life.

The educational value of community life and the development of the whole student psyche—in carrying forward these enduring ideals of the Collegiate Way, we as heirs to the collegiate tradition can promote, in the fragmented university of today, a student-centered vision of education that, in a way appropriate to our times, both builds character and sharpens minds. In so doing, we can help to make the modern university a place that answers the concerns of both Charles Francis Adams and Charles William Eliot—a place that reconciles the contrasting but compelling views of two Harvard men bashing one another.

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Us and Them

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3

Introduction

Joe and Jill know all about high school: the enemy line is drawn five feet from the chalkboard and a safe distance from the teacher's desk. Only Steve Urkel, the class curve-blower, is fool enough to cross it. Student/teacher conversations are a form of interrogation. A trip to the chalkboard is akin to enemy capture. In short, within schoolhouse walls, the roles of teacher and student are demarcated clearly.

After high school, however, just when Joe and Jill have the stand-off down to a science, they are shipped off to a university of their choice. They arrive at something called the residential college. It looks like a dorm. But right there in the college's official propaganda, Joe and Jill read a bold-faced blurb: Each residential college will increase student involvement in a total learning endeavor through opportunities both formal and informal for liberal arts inquiry and learning in every part of a student's residential environment. What!?!? Is even their home no longer safe? Teachers invading their living environment? Yeah, that's what they want.

Undoubtedly, integration of living and learning is a worthy mission for residential colleges. There are, however, obstacles. Joe and Jill arrive with a high school mindset. They are subject to peer pressure. They judge things by their past experience. And these problems are worsened by the standard overdose of fear, confusion, homesickness, and stress. For the residential college, this all seems to converge at one point: Joe and Jill's "Us and Them" mentality. How the college addresses this mentality is the crucial factor in the success or failure of the college.

Contact Environment

The contact environment is the space and mood between classes and programs, where Joe and Jill spend most of their time. If the "Us and Them" mentality stands here, it stands everywhere. The quality of the contact environment colors the success of the entire program.

For Joe and Jill orientation week is pivotal in developing the contact environment. They have only been out of high school for three months. The sooner "Us and Them" misconceptions are challenged, the less chance Joe and Jill have to confirm them. At Northeast Missouri State University, orientation is a week-long exercise. Faculty conduct a miniature for-credit classroom experience to accustom Joe and Jill to the academic environment under less stressful conditions than the regular semester. This mini-class approach doesn't solve the basic "Us and Them" problem. Joe and Jill are still required to show up every morning and "learn the material," just like high school.

Knowing full well they are about to begin multiple years of higher education, the last thing Joe and Jill want is a preview of classroom time. The classroom is the one aspect of college life they do have experience with. They want to know about the rest of college life. Orientation should be responsive to this need.

In high school, Joe and Jill knew where they stood and what was appropriate. At college, everything is changed. They still want to know where they stand, but, without new direction they will assume the teacher/student relationship is unchanged from high school. They don't know what else to assume. When the college tells Joe and Jill faculty/student interaction is profitable, they are dubious; it so rarely was in high school. They need a straightforward discussion of new expectations and appropriate behaviors, a new educational world view. Joe and Jill want some idea about how things are supposed to work at the university. They want some confirmation about how college is not the thirteenth grade.

A successful orientation week sets the stage for long-term development of the contact environment, and residential college peer advisors can play an important role in this process.

The development of general conversation skills could be a very useful part of orientation. If they want to go beyond "Us and Them" stereotypes, they need to feel confident in their ability to do so. This discussion would explore how to talk to professors as people, how to interact in the university environment, etc. Additional discussion regarding concepts of common ground and boundaries would also better equip Joe, Jill, and the faculty for future interaction. Joe and Jill, after all, used to sit in the back row and laugh just imagining their high school faculty in any non-classroom context. It takes time for them to learn professors have favorite sports teams and vacation spots too. They honestly don't know, and the lesson should start as soon as possible.

For example, playing Monopoly or Trivial Pursuit with a faculty member for an extended period would also help Joe and Jill. A surprising number of questions enter productive conversation during a good board game, and if Joe and Jill can become comfortable talking to a professor in well-defined situations like Trivial Pursuit, they will be more comfortable talking to a professor in future, less-defined exchanges.

To further avoid the classroom stigma, the class size could also be re-adjusted to avoid an "Us and Them" scenario. A professor teaching fifteen people for five mornings is probably less effective than a professor dividing each of five mornings among fifteen students and devoting each morning to three. If individual and small group interaction is the type of living and learning integration the college wants to promote, why not orient Joe and Jill to it from the beginning?

A successful orientation week sets the stage for long-term development of the contact environment, and residential college peer advisors can play an important role in this process. For Joe and Jill, they act as a catalyst. Although not typically hostile or recalcitrant, Joe and Jill still march to the high school drill. Finding themselves in new territory, they play it safe and stick with what they know. "Us and Them" stereotypes persist until a viable, safe alternative is seen. In other words, Joe and Jill have found themselves in Rome. The college needs to provide as many good Romans to follow as it can.

The peer advisors' close and informal contact is ideal for exerting a positive influence. They act as examples for faculty/student interaction and encourage Joe and Jill's interaction with the faculty. As mild authority figures, they are able to offer Jill and Joe a bit of validation when they experiment with the new and better educational concept. If the peer advisors are effective, the role-model relationship is self-perpetuating. Joe and Jill will emulate them and see more quickly the goals and lessons of the college. In turn, Joe and Jill become an example for their peers and for future years.

If the self-perpetuation of role-models does not materialize or generates negative examples, it damages the college and harms the contact environment. Upperclassmen who never learned what Joe and Jill need to learn and still espouse an "Us and Them" philosophy are counter-productive. On the other hand, those who demonstrate a willingness to integrate living and learning remove peer pressure and become the college's most valuable asset.

Programming

Once a positive contact environment has been established for Joe and Jill, the college can develop a successful programming agenda. The college sees programming as an ideal place to integrate living and learning, but Joe and Jill want to know what's in it for them, and/or why they should do something their friends don't do.

Successful programming and the many benefits of a well-executed program begin in the planning stage. Faculty should serve in the committee structure alongside Joe and Jill. Whether it be door-decoration, talent, long-range planning, monthly newsletters, or discipline, a healthy committee structure can build quality faculty/student interaction. The more good committees the college can generate, the more opportunities there are for interaction.

The main benefit of committee interaction is that it is organic. Because it has a purpose, it is not forced or artificial. Goals and tasks give Joe, Jill, and the faculty defined roles that break down the "Us and Them" dichotomy, necessary to Joe and Jill's getting comfortable with general conversation and the mutual exchange of ideas.

The college also needs to pay attention to the type of program it presents. Joe and Jill have not encountered anything like programming before and are skeptical. The closest approximations were class field trips, assemblies in the gym, and Dad making them watch Discovery Channel documentaries on the Dead Sea scrolls. These were rarely memorable, personally satisfying events.

[I]ntegration needs to proceed from living to learning, not the other way around.

Camouflaging the classroom does not work. By the second week of school, Joe and Jill are quite sure their classes are providing the recommended daily allowance of education. Therefore, integration needs to proceed from living to learning, not the other way around. Academic programs can make connections to the "real world;" however, they are not nearly as effective (read: "well-attended") as "real world" programs that allow Joe and Jill to bridge to their academic environment without feeling overdosed on education. The key is relevance.

Programming needs simply to have relevance, from both the college viewpoint and from Joe and Jill's. Faculty already understand the broad spectrum of things that are relevant, but Joe and Jill need to learn it one step at a time. The college professing it is not enough. As they begin to find relevance in the "real world," only then will they begin to look more closely for relevance in the academic world.

Relevance is loosely defined for Joe and Jill, but the college should be able to recognize it fairly easily. A program on how the human eye sees color, an interesting subject to be sure, is not relevant because Joe and Jill already know how to see color. They do it every waking moment. This sort of program makes Joe and Jill feel put upon by educational expectations. They know how to see color; they are not quite ready to attend a program on how color is seen.

On the other hand, banquets are relevant because people must eat; political programs are relevant because people like to argue and be part of the voting process; and study abroad programs are relevant because almost everyone wants to travel. Things that appeal to Joe and Jill's concerns or interests like the environment or rock music can also illustrate that there are things to learn everywhere, which is, after all, the crux of integrating living and learning.

As a program is executed, planners also need to make sure the program is useful in promoting faculty / student interaction. For example, seating should be arranged ahead of time for sit-down occasions. If it is not, Us will most likely sit with "Us" and Them will sit with "Them." By the same token, banquets are more effective than picnics because students and faculty are forced to sit down and interact, rather than gravitate toward familiarity. Joe and Jill are nervous at new and unstructured social functions and will hang with whomever they know: their roommates, not faculty.

[M]ake sure the program is useful in promoting faculty/ student interaction.

Curriculum

Once a good contact environment is established and complemented by quality programming, the college can assault the final bastion which divides "Us and Them"--the curriculum. A good starting point is to schedule classes in the residential college building (a formal classroom is not necessary). Joe and Jill cannot easily find an excuse to skip the class if they don't even have to put their shoes on. More importantly, it gives faculty a good reason to be in the building. Whether they are enrolled in this class or not, Joe and Jill become more comfortable with faculty being in the proximity of where they live. Since the faculty are there for a reason, their presence does not seem to be an invasion.

It is also logical and convenient to schedule classes in the college building because it encourages Joe and Jill to enroll in classes with faculty affiliated with the college. It makes sense for the faculty of the college to be the faculty for Joe and Jill. After all, regardless of how successful other aspects of the college are, the classroom still offers the most consistent and well-defined opportunity for interaction.

Locating classes within the building also creates better office hour arrangements in the college. Many faculty complain that holding office hours in the building is a waste of time because Joe and Jill never stop by. Office hours scheduled specifically for "interaction time" are grossly unsuccessful. The two times most students have an interest in talking to their professors are immediately before and after their class. Therefore, if classes meet within the college and faculty establish their office hours around this time period, then Joe and Jill are much more likely to stop by. With more direct access to office consultation, at times Joe and Jill are apt to use, the college can break another important barrier and generate important faculty / student interaction. In addition, it sets a good pattern for interaction in future semesters.

Faculty can also arrange special class sections reserved specifically for members of their college. This approach is particularly logical to Jill and Joe. If you do not take classes with them, why are they your faculty? Besides, Joe and Jill want direction. It is reassuring for the college structure to provide class choices, and they will appreciate anything that helps them streamline the registration process.

If possible, faculty should be allowed to develop special class topics, closely aligned with their interests or areas of expertise. The benefits of this are reciprocal. Given proper administrative support, the faculty are allowed to blend more naturally their residential college role, personal interest, and classroom responsibilities. In return, Joe and Jill begin to perceive classes as something related to interests (theirs or the professors). They make the living and learning connection. Never for a second did Joe and Jill think their high school math teacher was teaching math because it was a lifelong interest. If they see their college math teacher pursuing it as an interest, they gain a different perspective. In addition, if both faculty and students see they are participating in the class because of personal interest, a certain basis for common ground is established, a valuable tool for breaking the "Us and Them" barrier. Special classes may not necessarily be a freshman experience for Joe and Jill, but merely knowing that such classes are in the college's curriculum will influence the way in which Joe and Jill approach their college career.

Conclusion

Is it any wonder Joe relates to cartoon Calvin's alter ego, Spaceman Spiff? Spiff fantasizes about zapping Miss Wormwood, his teacher, with a ray gun. And is it any wonder Jill relates to Peppermint Pattie? Day after day, Pattie is forced to negotiate her homework with an unseen authority figure at the head of the class. No, it is completely logical. Joe and Jill are products of high school. They use four years of secondary school experience to interpret their first college year. It is rarely the same interpretation the college wants.

This realization is an excellent starting point. If the residential college fails to understand the problem from Joe and Jill's viewpoint, many of its shortcomings will remain inexplicable. On the other hand, if it can understand Joe and Jill's viewpoint and respond, the college has an excellent opportunity for integrating living and learning and, more importantly, ending the "Us and Them" mentality.

Residential Colleges: Vestige or Model for Improving College Residence Halls

DERRELL HART

TERRY B. SMITH

4

Introduction

The residential college can be viewed in some ways as a last vestige of the long-cherished ideal of students and faculty living and working together, sharing a mutual love of academic pursuits and intellectual discourse. If one looks closely at student behaviors and educational outcomes, this ideal residential college probably never existed. But clearly the goals of the "Collegiate Way of Living," with its common residence, structured community life, and shared intellectual interchange (Ryan, 1992) continue to be energetically pursued on a number of campuses.

With a faculty committed to a residential based curriculum and participating in — if not residing in — the life of the community beyond the classroom, the successful residential college is viewed as an alternative to the mainstream curriculum in its home institutions. Students choosing this alternative tend to be bright, independent and, on occasion, alienated by their experiences in traditional classrooms. They seek challenges that are more intensive and personal than are likely to be offered elsewhere in their institutions. They also seek the personal attention and support that come from knowing and interacting freely with faculty.

Similarly, faculty involved in a residential college tend to be different from colleagues in their home disciplines. They are likely to see themselves first as teachers. Their academic interests are often more broadly defined; multi-disciplinary pursuits are common. Residential college faculty value opportunities to talk with students about social and intellectual issues in and out of their disciplines.

[F]aculty involved in a residential college tend to be different from colleagues in their home disciplines. They are likely to see themselves first as teachers.

However, such faculty and student interests and attitudes are uncommon. American higher education long ago committed itself to a model of discipline-based education emphasizing the dissemination of knowledge economically to large numbers in structured classroom settings. For many institutions, the residential college is seen as costly, demanding in terms of faculty time and energy, and too far removed from the mainstream activities of the campus to compete successfully for campus based financial resources on more than a limited basis.

Where the residential college does exist, especially at large institutions, it tends to be a small enclave of teaching excellence and curriculum innovation. It serves as a visible symbol of the institution's commitment to undergraduate students and can offer alternative educational opportunities for those students seeking nontraditional and more individualized educational experiences. Smaller schools wishing to focus their institutional priorities directly on undergraduate education and to present a comprehensive model of personalized education to prospective students tend to consider the residential college model as a means to present themselves as distinctly different from their competitors. In the final analysis, perhaps, institutional distinctiveness and competitive advantage among institutions are the most important considerations related to the residential college, no small consideration in times of shrinking financial resources and increased competition for quality students.

The residential college model and the ideals of the "Collegiate Way of Living" described by Ryan (1992) offer important values to consider in relation to the practicalities of contemporary living programs. The problem for colleges and universities, and therefore the residence life staff, is clear: many students spend little time pursuing intellectual interests outside the classroom, and, beyond getting good grades, student commitment to the academic life is often shallow (Boyer, 1990). Compounding the problem is the fact that present day college students and educators, faculty and staff alike, are most familiar and comfortable with an educational system in which academic life and co-curricular life exist, as Boyer notes, in almost separate worlds.

Closer relations between faculty and students, an improved intellectual climate on campus, better delivery of student services, and fewer distinctions between in-classroom and out-of-classroom learning are crying needs on many, perhaps most, college campuses. Residential campuses have an obligation to support the educational mission of their institutions by encouraging linkages between classroom learning, intellectual pursuit, and co-curricular campus life.

The residential college model, with faculty living in and / or affiliating with the college, classes taught in residential facilities, readily available academic advising, personal support for addressing academic problems, and an atmosphere for encouraging academic exploration and intellectual discourse provides useful direction for examining opportunities for creating linkages between academic and co-curricular campus life. The model strengthens learning opportunities for individual students and enriches the intellectual environment of the residential campus.

Residence Hall Realities and Opportunities

Residence halls, unfortunately, are considered by college administrators and faculty, and even in some cases by the leaders of the residential living program, as part of the non-academic side of college life. For traditional 18-year-old students entering college this is particularly unfortunate. Despite all that we know about the positive impact of living on campus in relation to student success and persistence in college, (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, pp. 399-402) it is difficult to gain broad institutional support for programs that foster linkages between in-class and out-of-class activities.

The reasons for this are deeply rooted. Most faculty have received their professional training at large universities committed to individualized research and specialized graduate study; multidisciplinary and co-curricular involvement are not rewarded. The professional demands of academic disciplines and the incentive structures, especially tenure and promotion, mitigate against significant involvement with undergraduate intellectual life, especially outside the formal academic setting.

Were even large numbers of faculty committed to the "Collegiate Way of Living," other hurdles remain. To compete successfully for resources, especially "academic" resources, requires administrative support and status equivalent to a discipline-based department, if not an academic division, and a strong champion in the president's or provost's office.

Residence life professionals have other philosophical arguments and concerns. If financial support for faculty time and resources comes from residence hall auxiliary funds, rather than instructional and educational budgets, there is the concern of basic fairness to students who pay for the services but do not receive the benefits. The residential college faculty are likely to be compensated at substantially higher rates than traditional staff for their live-in responsibilities. Residence hall administrators justifiably observe that resident faculty are often not asked, expected, or willing to do many of the jobs required to operate a successful hall. Often it is necessary to hire additional live-in staff to supplement the faculty if the day-to-day responsibilities are to be carried out satisfactorily.

There is also the concern that faculty living and working in the residential college have little commitment to or training for addressing the developmental concerns of college students or to addressing the interpersonal problems associated with close group living (Creeden, 1988, pp. 61-62). The important developmental issues of community living, personal identity, cultural understanding, life-style choice, sexual and mental health, chemical abuse, etc. are not likely to be addressed with any success if there are not professional residence life staff trained and committed to student development as well as educational programming in the residence halls. It is an oversimplification to think that community living problems will disappear because of the presence of faculty and the intellectual stimulation associated with participating in a community of scholars. This problem is especially acute for new, less mature students.

There is also the question of student interest in the residential college living environment. Some residence life administrators argue that students rarely know, much less appreciate, the differences between residential colleges and traditional residence halls and that students are rarely interested in involvement with faculty outside the classroom. Interaction external to the classroom seldom occurs easily or naturally for either faculty or students. Residence halls, the argument goes, should be considered sanctuaries from the stress and grind of academics and should be kept somewhat free from academic programming.

The professional demands of academic disciplines and the incentive structures, especially tenure and promotion, mitigate against significant involvement with undergraduate intellectual life, especially outside the formal academic setting.

Despite such observations, the main consideration is that colleges and universities have as their primary mission the education of students. College residence halls exist to support that mission. Regardless of all other considerations, the fundamental purpose of residence halls is to support student success, and student academic success is the highest priority. The utmost responsibility of residential living staff — the reason they exist — is to encourage behaviors, programs, and activities that support academic success and to minimize individual (and institutional) conditions and group behaviors that reduce opportunities for that success. The residential college provides a philosophy and framework for residential living programs that strive to support student success in college.

First-Year Focus

For residential living programs that emphasize the first-year experience, opportunities to link academic and student life are especially rich. On residential campuses a large proportion of the entering student population is likely to live in-residence and, in many cases, these new students represent the majority of students living in university residence halls. In these instances, or in instances in which freshman students are assigned to designated first-year halls, efforts to create an academic focus for the residential living program deserve the highest priority.

Several of the goals for the first-year experience in residence halls, as identified by Zeller, Fidler, and Barefoot (1991), provide a foundation for residence life professionals wishing to improve the linkages between the residence life program and the educational goals of the institution. Specifically, residence life professionals have a responsibility as educators to:

1) Help first-year students make a smooth transition to the university community;
2) Enhance new student retention and academic success;
3) Provide opportunities for informal out-of-class contact between faculty and new students;
4) Offer worthwhile social and educational programs;
5) Work to create an ethos that the university is an interactive community of scholars.

These academic goals of the residential first year are of critical importance to student success and should be pursued with enthusiasm by academic and student affairs leaders alike. The potential is immense for helping students to master the difficult first year as well as create a more intellectual focus for campus life generally.

Leaders of colleges or universities, because of economic and other realities, may find the broadest and most elaborate residential college models not feasible or difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, those who seriously wish to improve the intellectual and academic climate of their campus and strengthen their residence hall program should consider active efforts to implement residential college values and concepts, focusing especially on first-year students. Specifically, they should commit themselves to faculty and staff involvement, educational and developmental programming, a meaningful residential-based service delivery system using peer delivered programs and services, and finally, programs for extended opportunities for learning through student involvement outside the classroom.

Academic Residential Focus

Given the evidence that residence hall living contributes substantially to the satisfaction and retention of college students (Astin, 1985; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), colleges and universities commit a serious oversight if they underestimate the importance of the residence hall program to the students' total educational experience. Responsibility for strengthening the academic focus of residence halls lies first with the residence life program directors, but significant support and encouragement must come from the president and the chief academic and student affairs officers of the institution. Without active support from those responsible for faculty activities and the effective delivery of services to students, residence life administrators cannot be expected to build a residence hall program that contributes substantially to the academic success of students and the intellectual climate of the campus. Without institutional commitment, educational programming in the residence halls is unlikely ever to be more than loosely-coordinated, one-shot efforts resulting from the personal initiative of residence staff members of individual faculty.

Establishing an academic atmosphere and focus for the residence hall program requires planned efforts with the students themselves to set expectations for residential living that support and encourage academic success. Continuous reinforcement, beginning with new student recruitment and early letters prior to arrival on campus and continuing with formal and informal discussions throughout the year, is required. A strong everyday commitment from all members of the residence life staff to intellectual discussion, developmental programming, faculty involvement, and support for individual student success is essential to maintain an academic focus for the residence halls.

Faculty and Student Relations

Student involvement with faculty is more strongly related to satisfaction with college than any other type of involvement or, indeed, any other student or institutional characteristic (Astin, 1985, p. 149). Those familiar with the literature on student retention and satisfaction with college understand the importance of developing and supporting opportunities for faculty and student interaction. Residential programs encouraging faculty and student interaction are difficult to develop (and even more difficult to sustain), but they deserve the highest priority in residential programming intended to support academic success.

Identifiable programs linking residential life and specific academic programs and services are most effective as a way to increase student interaction with faculty and staff. These living-learning programs can be as simple as grouping students according to academic interests or as complex as offering comprehensive programs for academic credit in residence halls with residential college status. If successful, these programs contribute significantly to the personal and intellectual development of residents, enrich the traditional college curriculum, encourage the development of community among students and faculty, improve the residential living environment, increase student satisfaction with their college experience, and create a "climate of caring" that serves students well in times of academic or personal stress (Hart, 1991).

Traditional dining hall guest programs, inviting faculty and staff to residence hall events or as guest speakers, supporting faculty financially who wish to host students, attending cultural or educational activities on- or off-campus, favorite professor dinners or celebrations, all serve to reinforce faculty-student relations. These activities are encouraged by monthly dinners, newsletters celebrating successful programs, constant reminders of campus and civic events, and enthusiastic institutional encouragement of faculty who contribute their time and energy to students in this way. A few institutions deliver academic advising and other student services directly to the residence halls. These "take out" advising, counseling, and informational programs, provided at critical times of the year by student service departments and knowledgeable faculty and staff invited to the residence halls, can significantly contribute to student learning in the residence halls and the academic focus of hall programming. These efforts demonstrate the institution's commitment to student success and provide services the student might not otherwise seek or receive.

Despite the strong social life influence that permeates residence halls, students need to know the institution cares about their academic success and that the residence hall living experience is inherently linked with the academic activities of the institution. Educational and student development programming is essential to demonstrating this link. Dude and Hayhurst (1991) make a large number of programming suggestions including academic themes and other types of programming based on common student needs at specific times of the year. Residence life staff implementing even a few of these programming ideas each month will demonstrate the commitment to student learning and success needed throughout the residence hall program.

Residence-Based Student Involvement and Service Delivery

The concept of student involvement is the key to effective learning experiences for college students; opportunities for student involvement should be maximized on the college campus (Study Group, 1984; Kuh, Schuh, & Whitt, 1991). Residence halls can and should be a major center for community service learning activities, leadership development programming, experiential learning beyond the classroom, and students helping students.

In this regard, extending opportunities for improving services to students based on a concept of using trained student educators to link the residence hall program to specific academic support and student service departments to provide services in the residence hall setting deserves special mention. There are many examples of successful student involvement programs in which students effectively deliver information, programs, and services to other students (Hart, 1992). We willingly pay students as desk attendants, mail clerks, and security guards. Should we not be willing to employ students to help other students as peer educators and service providers—activities clearly central to the educational purposes of our residence halls and our institutions?

A student service director wishing to increase office effectiveness should enthusiastically endorse a proposal to provide hourly wages for students to work in the residence hall setting to offer academic information, learning support services, cultural awareness training, career information, health education, or other desired information or programs. The servicing department would be responsible for selection, training, and the quality of information and services delivered. The residence hall program would provide space, access to residents, and funding. The symbolism of students employed to help other students succeed in the residential environment is unmistakable.

Conclusion

While the residential college and the "Collegiate Way of Living" may be considered peripheral to the mainstream of higher education today, they represent values central to the fundamental mission of colleges and universities and to what should be most important in residential living programs. It guides closer student relations with faculty and better delivery of student services, makes fewer distinctions between classroom learning and the students' total educational experience, and develops an improved intellectual climate on campus. In times of financial stress, improved opportunities for individual attention and a commitment to quality programs and services for students allow colleges and universities to present themselves as distinctly different from their competitors.

The residential college is indeed a vestige. It is also an ideal. It is the oldest concept in Western higher education: a seamless web of student personal and intellectual living in the residential setting and an ideal worthy of practical implementation.

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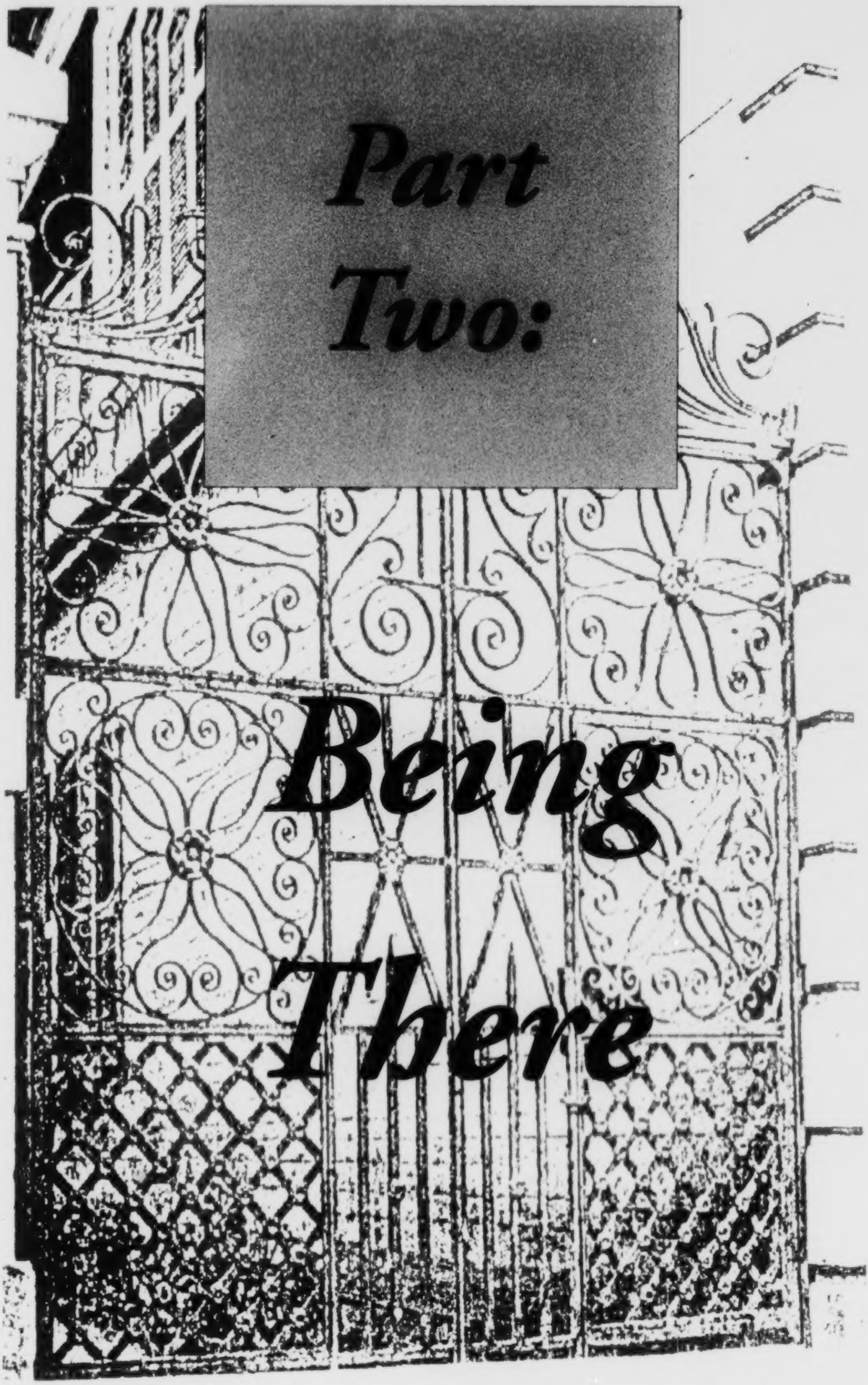
Part Two:

Being There



Meeting the Needs of Today's Students: The Evolution of a Residential Academic Program

TERRI J. MACEY

5

The past 20 years have seen profound changes in the economic and social climate of the United States. The consequences of these changes for higher education have been dramatic. Universities are under attack by the public and the media for promoting research at the expense of undergraduate education. Parents and students increasingly take a consumer-oriented view of higher education and want proof that they are getting value for their tuition dollars. Faculty are concerned that students are neither prepared for nor motivated to accept the challenges of learning.

Colleges and universities meet these challenges through new freshman seminar programs and improved academic advising. At the same time, many existing programs are adapting to the new realities of the 1990s. One is the residential academic program at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Changes in the Student Population

Student goals. One consequence of the economic changes of the past 20 years is that entering students today feel less secure about their job prospects than did students in the past. This insecurity is reflected in their educational goals (Astin, Green, & Korn, 1987; Erickson & Strommer, 1991; Katchadourian & Boli, 1985). Horowitz (1987) describes a fear among many students of "downward social mobility," a fear of not being able to afford the life-style of their parents. In their report of 20-year trends in the goals, values, and interests of college freshman, Astin et al. (1987) report that a higher number of new students today say that a primary reason for attending college is "to be very well off financially," while a smaller number of students state that developing a meaningful philosophy of life is an important goal. Although more recent data show a slowing of this trend, "careerism" remains a reality in higher education.

> *Universities are under attack by the public and the media for promoting research at the expense of undergraduate education.*

Astin et al. (1987) report that students today show a much greater interest in business careers, which are relatively high paying and generally do not require graduate training.

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Careers that require advanced training and/or are relatively low paying are decreasing in popularity. (However, professional careers such as medicine and law are showing a dramatic rise in interest among women.) Thus, while most colleges and universities continue to be committed to providing a liberal arts education that affirms the importance of intellectual values, students are less inclined to share the universities' commitment to these values.

Student preparedness. College faculty and administrators believe that today's new college students are less prepared for the rigors of academic life than were students in the past. Indeed, studies show limitations in students' writing and reading abilities and critical thinking skills. In addition to the well-publicized decline in college test scores, Astin et al. (1987) found that almost twice as many freshmen in 1985 felt that they would need remedial help in specific courses as did freshmen in 1971. Astin et al. (1987) also report that students are entering college with higher grade point averages, but argue that this is a consequence of fewer high school students taking substantive courses, with higher grades being achieved in courses such as driver's education, band, and physical education. Evidence from work by Erickson and Strommer (1991) supports this argument.

Today's students are struggling with the reality of difficult economic times and are trying to prepare themselves as best they can for the complex world they will face.

The changes in students' interests and abilities over the past 20 years have left faculty and administrators struggling to provide a quality education to students who may seem uninterested in and unprepared for that education. This is not to imply that the total responsibility for this dilemma lies with the students. Today's students are struggling with the reality of difficult economic times and are trying to prepare themselves as best they can for the complex world they will face. But in addition to the challenges described above, today's college students face an altered political and social climate on campus.

Political and social changes. Students today feel they must learn to survive in an economy that is less expansive than in the past. This belief is reflected in their focus on career preparation over personal or intellectual growth in college. This strategy may be appropriate for today's economic market. As Erickson and Strommer (1991) have pointed out, "Chief executive officers of companies . . . speak eloquently of the value of the liberally educated man or woman, but their recruiters on campus rarely grant interviews to English or philosophy majors, much less hire them" (p. 21).

There are other challenges unknown to previous groups of students. There has been a dramatic change in the availability of college education to students from different ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Although still under-represented as a proportion of the population, the number of ethnic minority students at colleges and universities has increased dramatically in the past 20 years (Astin et al., 1987; Erickson & Strommer, 1991). Once available primarily to the wealthy, higher education has become increasingly accessible to students from middle and lower-middle economic groups (Horowitz, 1987). The consequence of these social changes is that college students are now presented with much greater diversity of background, experience, and values among their fellow students than in the past.

While faculty and administrators consider this diversity to be valuable, among students it can present a challenge for which many are unprepared. Students from ethnic minority groups arrive on campuses to find their numbers dramatically under-represented in the university population and feel alone and isolated. Students from majority or minority groups who have lived in ethnically homogeneous areas may feel uncomfortable with or even threatened by exposure to different cultures. The most extreme consequences of these social changes, such as an increase in "hate crimes" and the development of speech codes on campuses, have been well covered by the media (e.g., Berman, 1992; D'Souza, 1991). This media coverage may create a sense among students that the university is a more hostile place than facts would bear out. Even if these reports are exaggerated, the impression they create may serve to make all students feel less secure.

The original goal of the program was to provide a community for freshmen that would integrate academic exploration and personal growth.

While there may have never been a "golden age" of the university when students spent the majority of their time studying and absorbing knowledge at the feet of their beloved faculty, current social and political trends have combined to present challenges that neither students nor faculty have previously had to face. That is the situation that the Sewall Residential Academic Program at the University of Colorado, Boulder, found itself facing.

The Sewall Residential Academic Program

The Sewall Residential Academic Program serves approximately 300 freshmen. It was established in 1970 as a response to students' demands for a relevant, student-centered curriculum, demands that arose out of the student unrest and political and social upheaval that began during the late 1960s. The original goal of the program was to provide a community for freshmen that would integrate academic exploration and personal growth. The program was designed to provide a shared intellectual experience, to foster involvement in the academic community, to encourage students to become responsible for themselves and their community, and to demonstrate the advantages of the small college within the larger university. Courses were often experimental and/or experiential, and there was focus on personal growth and development (Fowler, 1989). Students wanted an alternative to traditional university courses and took an active role in designing many of the seminars. The program was funded by the College of Arts and Sciences with additional funds coming from a resident fee.

The Sewall Program became quite successful, and other residential programs were established on campus using it as a model. For many years the program remained unchanged, although the curriculum gradually became less experimental, and the focus on personal growth diminished significantly, as did student input regarding course offerings. Over the years students became less interested in participating in the life of the community until eventually many chose to live at Sewall only to be able to take advantage of the smaller-sized versions of required courses taught within the university at large. Frequently students went elsewhere (usually to the Greek system) to develop friendships and a sense of community.

It became increasingly apparent in recent years that many students were not involved in the academic life of the program, nor were they taking advantage of the living-learning environment it provided. At that point the administration began to question the value of the program in light of the substantial financial contribution. It was clear that the program as originally established was becoming less effective and needed to be redesigned to be meaningful for today's students.

Redesigning the Program

Upon re-examining the structure of the program the university administration and the directors of the program agreed that the fundamental goal—to provide a living-learning environment where students could develop both personally and academically—had not changed. What had changed were the means.

Three major areas were identified. First, students wanted to focus on meeting university core requirements and were less interested in experimental or elective courses. Second, many students were not academically prepared to succeed at the university. Third, students were feeling challenged by the cultural diversity on campus. The changes made in the program tried to address those three issues.

Program theme. One of the first issues addressed was students' concerns about career preparation. Because of the rising cost of a university education students appeared uninterested, for the most part, in experimental and non-core courses. Their parents, too, were highly focussed on courses that clearly counted toward graduation, although students were required to take elective courses to graduate. That these courses seemed not to "count" underscored the extent to which students were obsessed with getting a degree preparing them for a career. Non-core courses that focussed on personal interests or personal growth were viewed as less valuable than core courses that met specific graduation requirements.

Many students feel challenged by the social and cultural diversity they may be encountering for the first time at the university.

To address this issue the directors of the Sewall Program established a theme for the program, "Themes in American Culture and Society," which loosely aligned itself with the American Studies program on campus. Nearly all courses offered at Sewall count toward fulfillment of the arts and sciences core requirement in "U.S. Context" which examines important aspects of American society and culture. This focus offers the core courses that students prefer but also provides flexibility in course offering. Courses in American studies, history, psychology, sociology, political science, art, literature and philosophy all fall under the category of "U.S. Context."

The theme also permits courses of direct relevance to students' lives. Since nearly all students have experienced 18 years of life in the United States, faculty are usually able to focus on issues with which students have direct experience. Thus students are more likely to participate in class and develop both personally and intellectually.

Academic skills. Many students arrive at the university insufficiently prepared to succeed academically, especially in writing and critical thinking. Sewall has addressed this in a number of ways.

First, class enrollments are limited to no more than 22 students. Small course size enables faculty to interact with all students in the class, as well as to provide an environment where most students feel comfortable about contributing to discussions. Students develop a sense of themselves as participating members of an academic community. In addition, courses are required to be writing and discussion intensive. Because of the small class size, faculty are able to make frequent writing assignments and help students develop their writing and critical thinking skills. Classes rely heavily on discussion to supplement faculty lectures, which are kept to a minimum. In the context of class discussion the instructor can help students identify assumptions, develop arguments, and address other elements for critical thinking.

The program also offers a writing lab to all students in the program. A faculty member teaches fundamental writing skills in the context of class assignments. Students bring papers in progress to the lab and receive help with composition and argument, reducing the burden on other faculty and providing intensive help to those students who need it.

Cultural awareness. Many students feel challenged by the social and cultural diversity they may be encountering for the first time at the university. The Sewall Program addresses this through co-curricular programming. Students attend films or theater performances that deal with issues in American culture and society in the company of a faculty member who helps them think about and discuss the issues raised by the performance. The music series exposes students to diverse types of music such as a recent barbecue with an Afro-Caribbean band. Most students (and many faculty) were previously unfamiliar with this music.

In addition, the Multicultural Center on campus provides workshops to faculty and classes, allowing Sewall faculty and students to discuss issues of racism and sexism in a structured way. They help students examine their prejudices and assumptions about culture and identity.

Academically and personally accomplished sophomores are hired to develop activities that other students will find meaningful. They also serve as role models for other students and encourage their peers to recognize that there are a variety of avenues for success at the university.

Evaluating the Revised Program

It is too early to assess the effectiveness of the revised program in any formal way. Students who remained for a second year at Sewall express satisfaction with the new program. In addition, participation in co-curricular activities has increased. Since the decline in student participation outside the classroom was one of the motivating factors for revising the program, this is seen as an indication of success.

The residential academic programs at the University of Colorado have traditionally been popular with students, and the number of applicants far exceeds the spaces available in these programs. This was true of the Sewall Program before it was redesigned and continues to be true. The need for a more personal academic experience within the large university continues to be felt by students and parents. The changes in the Sewall Program were not driven by any perceived dissatisfaction on the part of those who participated in it. They were driven by the administration's and faculty's perception that students must be better prepared for and integrated into the academic life of the university and that an effective residential academic program can accomplish this. It was felt that the Sewall Program needed to be revised in order to do this more effectively. Whether students who have participated in the revised program will become better "citizens of the university" than did Sewall students in the past will be difficult to assess (Astin, 1993). This assessment will not be undertaken until the revised program has been in existence for several years.

Challenges

While the revision of the Sewall Program has been successful in many respects, it has not eliminated all challenges. The primary challenge continues to be to encourage students to see themselves as part of a living-learning environment and participate fully in the academic, as well as social, life of the university. A high percentage of Sewall student (close to 50%) still choose affiliation with the Greek system and generally do not participate in the community life of the academic program. To address this, the program, which has traditionally been all freshmen, is opened to a small percentage of sophomore students (about 10%). The inclusion of sophomores allows freshmen to see that not all students participate in the Greek system and that becoming a committed member of an academic community is a viable choice at the university. It is worth noting that the struggle to involve students academically arises out of their perception that higher education is a key to career success and their failure to see any intrinsic value in academic life. As such, this will remain a difficult issue to address successfully.

Financial issues continue to be of concern to university administrators and parents. Fee-based programs are under pressure to offer a university experience that cannot be achieved through other avenues. With a fee of $500 the Sewall Academic Program feels obligated to be responsive to parents as well as the College of Arts and Sciences, which also contributes financially to the program. However, the administration at the University of Colorado has a strong commitment to its residential academic programs and plans are underway to establish another program.

The challenge remains of providing an educational program that meets students' felt need for a practical education and the university's commitment to liberal education. These demands must be addressed in a way that allows the value of both to be underscored.

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Student Life as Text: Discovering Connections, Creating Community

GRANT CORNWELL
RICHARD GUARASCI

6

Introduction

One main assumption of this chapter is that curricula and educational designs are historical artifacts. Far from some kind of immutable Platonic form, the structure and content of higher education must take account of the growth of knowledge, both in the sense of what we know and in the sense of what we mean by knowing, and it must take account of the students we are teaching and the cultures from whence they come. Thus, in this way, educational ideas should be evaluated in terms of their appropriateness to the particular historical circumstances in which they are intended to function.

The thesis of this chapter is that residential colleges, while old in basic concept, have a particularly compelling agenda and justification in contemporary American higher education. While many of Meiklejohn's (1928) ambitions for the Experimental College in Madison still resonate today, we miss everything if we fail to take account of the radical epistemological, political, and cultural transformations that form the context for our work.

A Curricular-Based Residential College Model: The Saint Lawrence First-Year Program

The Saint Lawrence First-year Program (FYP) has four components:

1) Every first-year student lives in one of twelve FYP Residential Colleges. Groups of 45 students, three faculty, three upperclass Resident Assistants, and three upperclass Academic Mentors constitute an FYP Residential College. There is teaching, office, and social space in each FYP College, and in most cases, a kitchen. The RAs and mentors live in the college but the faculty do not.

> *Residential colleges . . . have the potential to help students develop the ability to recognize and respect differences, to understand the roots and meaning of those differences, and most importantly, to work cooperatively with persons fundamentally different from themselves.*

2) Members of each college are enrolled in a common interdisciplinary, team-taught, core course thematically

structured to inquire into certain enduring questions of human experience, by exploring classic texts from the Western tradition, juxtaposed with non-Western, critical, and feminist perspectives, via collaborative pedagogical practices. This course meets twice a week in plenary session, with all 45 students and three faculty in attendance, and twice a week in seminars of 15 students and one faculty member.

3) Each course includes a robust communication skills component intended to develop in students an articulate and authentic voice. Significant attention to critical thinking, writing, research, and speech is thoroughly woven into the fabric of the courses, with the goal of giving students personal and collective access to and ownership of the ideas and issues being explored.
4) Each student's seminar instructor is also her or his advisor, thus enabling the advising relationship to develop in the seminar, in the core course, and in the residential community.

> *Every curriculum ought to have students engage in interdisciplinary study, since it is this mode of inquiry that enables students to grasp how the disciplines speak to common problems, bringing to bear different methods, assumptions, and tools of analysis.*

Faculty for the FYP are drawn from the Saint Lawrence faculty at large. Teaching in the FYP constitutes half a faculty teaching load. Thus, while in the FYP, faculty continue to teach half-time in their departments and rotate back full-time to their departments after three years in the FYP. The faculty in the FYP at any given time determine what texts and issues will be treated in common across all 12 colleges. From the outset Saint Lawrence faculty decided to legislate internally only a minimum of common content to be contextualized, approached, and surrounded in different ways in each of the 12 colleges, according to the vision and understanding of each team. Thus while every first-year student at Saint Lawrence might read specific texts by Darwin, Marx, Freud, Chodorow, Gilligan, and Black Elk, how they approach these texts and what else they read around them will differ greatly from college to college.

Goals and Justifications For Curricular-Based Residential Colleges

The goals and justifications for a program as elaborate as the one under consideration are multiple. In the remainder of this chapter some of the compelling problems that face the academy and our culture today are outlined, and why a program like the FYP is especially well-suited to addressing them are suggested via case studies.

Problem #1: The Disintegration and Hyper-specialization of Knowledge. In the last half century the academy has subdivided itself into increasingly narrower units of organization. Departments, specialties, and sub-specialties have proliferated in ways that have left the map of most colleges' curricula complex beyond the point of intelligibility, even to its faculty. Even within departments, members do not consider themselves competent to read one another's work or even describe what goes on in one another's upper-level seminars. The questions that ought to concern us as teachers are: How are students to navigate their way through this terrain? How are they to make sense of curricula in ways that will enable them to pursue a coherent and meaningful education? What do these disciplines and courses have to do with each other? And more importantly, how are students to make the connection between the disciplines, their lives, and their ability to act in the world?

Interdisciplinary courses taught within residential colleges provide a powerful educational vehicle for integration-making connections. Every curriculum ought to have students engage in interdisciplinary study, since it is this mode of inquiry that enables students to grasp how the disciplines speak to common problems, bringing to bear different methods, assumptions, and tools of analysis. The world does not present to us problems that are neatly contained within the purview of any one discipline. Problems of the environment, the distribution of wealth and resources, international peace, global economy, and AIDS are multidimensional and can be comprehended only if the scientific, the economic, the social, and the cultural are brought into conversation with one another. It is in this way that interdisciplinary study is empowering for our students; it equips them with the capacity to collect multiple perspectives into a comprehensive understanding.

Even as disciplines narrow, deepen, and assume more and more background to speak their language meaningfully, the very idea of expertise is being radically undermined, or at least transformed, at a metatheoretical level.

What is unique to interdisciplinary inquiry in the context of residential colleges is that in addition to the creation of connections between disciplines and between perspectives, there is the possibility of creating connections between ideas and practice. Case in point: In one FYP college, students were examining the social, political, and technological factors that contribute to patterns of energy consumption in industrialized nations versus so-called underdeveloped nations. The college project was to work toward hypotheses about what values and practices would make for a sustainable future. As part of this project students collected data on the amount of energy they were consuming as a college in the beginning of the semester, by measuring everything from electricity used to fuel consumed for heat and transportation. These students then imposed upon themselves rigorous lifestyle changes. Aspects of their plan included walking instead of driving, recycling and reusing resources, dietary changes, living with colder temperatures, and fewer lights and showers. After living with this plan for a while and experiencing the social, cultural, as well as physical aspects of this life-style change, they measured the energy savings that their experiment produced. This is an example of how living-learning communities can experiment with ideas in practice and, in this way, enable students to make immediate connections between what they study and how they live.

Problem #2: Postmodernism and the Irony of Expertise. Even as disciplines narrow, deepen, and assume more and more background to speak their language meaningfully, the very idea of expertise is being radically undermined, or at least transformed, at a metatheoretical level. The postmodern critique has at least opened in an uncloseable way this question: do experts know in great depth a narrow slice of reality or are they fluent with a metaphor or language that probably says something about themselves and those with whom they speak but which may not connect with anything outside that discourse community? Popular culture and therefore student culture have adopted a distilled version of this postmodern skepticism. The result, a healthy one, is that students do not readily accept, or at least, are not impressed with, the authority that supposedly attends expertise.

By creating space for, and thereby legitimizing, student experience through writing and speaking projects which ask them to connect with their experience the ideas and arguments being grappled with in the course, residential colleges can become communities of learning where knowledge is not transmitted from expert to passive recipient, but created socially. Authority is shared, dispersed, transient; it moves around the college depending on the moment, the question, the need. Faculty retain authority for how a text is understood within a certain professional discourse community, and this knowledge is useful and important at times.

Authority is shared, dispersed, transient; it moves around the college depending on the moment, the question, the need.

But students collectively come to possess an authority for how a text is understood within the college community, and this knowledge too is useful and important. Furthermore, each member of a college possesses the authority of her own experience, and when this experience is brought into conversation with texts and ideas, and shared with the college community, new knowledge is socially constructed and owned by the community as a whole.

Case in point: In one FYP college, conceived and taught by a sociologist, a psychologist, and a philosopher, one of the units of the course was an interdisciplinary inquiry into the construction of personal identity. Over the course of several weeks the college had read selections from Plato, Freud, Chodorow, Erikson, Sartre, Goffman, and Lasch as well as Sartre's *Nausea*, Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women*, and Hesse's *Siddhartha*. At the end of this unit students were asked to produce a video monologue in which they were to narrate a moment from their experience central to the formation of their identity. They were asked to reconstruct an Eriksonian identity crisis (i.e., a point in their personal history wherein they recognized within themselves conflicting values or beliefs and chose between them in a way that defined their identity from that point forward). Students explored moments of wrestling with peer and parental pressure, coming to terms with abusive or dysfunctional family relations, alcoholism, bulimia, pregnancy, and abortion from the perspective of both genders. The narrative below is the text of a black woman, Debora, recalling the internal tensions she experienced when she was called a "nigger":

> How can you ask me how I feel? What do you mean, how I feel? Would you believe that some of my best friends are white? I don't know how they could call me that. I mean what gives them the right to call me that name? I hung out at the malls. I went to prep schools. I'm not what they said that I was. So fine; you ask me what did they call me, right? This is not really important, right? I never once sat in a welfare line. I mean, for crying out loud, I never saw food stamps. I lived on the best side of the city, and yet I come here with these pompous, stuck-up arrogant people and they call me, they call me a nigger. It just doesn't make sense. It doesn't even sound right: nigger. I mean, I laughed at them. How can you call me that? You don't know me well enough to call me that name. I mean, I wanted to say "Fuck you" but it just didn't make sense at the time. Yeh! I'm a nigger, right? No I'm not. I'm not like that at all. It's pretty stupid if you ask me. I mean, we used to make a joke when I was younger. We used to say money spends in any mall. So it didn't matter that I was black. Nobody cared. Nobody gave a damn that I was black cause it wasn't like that. I don't know, all this time it just never really mattered. My parents never make a big deal out of it I guess. Nobody brought me a mirror and said "Hey, you know, notice it." It just didn't matter. I mean, look at me. I don't see any Nikes or any kangol hat or whatever they wear. I'm not like that, I'm just not. I mean, who gives them the right to say that to me? Nobody has the right to call me that. I can't believe this shit, I really can't. I don't know, I don't know what I'm supposed to say back because I know what I am and I'm not like that at all. It's just not a part of me, it's not. I've never had to deal with that. Who cares? I'm better than that, I'm a lot better than that. That's like the last thing I need right now is to come here and deal with this "problem." I still can't believe you ask me how I feel!

This is a complex narrative, and the discussion of it that ensued in the college, both in the class and in the residence, did much to bring the group to a collective understanding of the complexities of race in American culture. Debora's account made the discussion of race and identity at once more immediate and more concrete, and discussions of its "authority" prompted useful meta-conversations about the relations between theory and experience, about issues of authority and expertise, and about how we know and how we learn. These were powerful moments of peer teaching and collaborative learning, and they were made possible by the structure of the residential college.

Problem #3: Disengagement and the Alienation of Schooling. One often hears the complaint that our students are not engaged in their course work, do not bring to the classroom a self-sustaining intellectual curiosity, and therefore fail to perceive the intrinsically interesting nature of the subjects that burn so brightly for faculty. This perception of disengagement is not helped by the refrain frequently sung by students that 90% of what they learned in college that had lasting value, they learned outside the classroom in their social and political relations in campus life.

The causes of this disengagement are at least two-fold. First, in our culture a college diploma functions as a credential, a commodity necessary for social and economic mobility. When it is only this, it and the steps leading to it are of only instrumental value; then course, majors, activities--all of the bureaucratically sanctioned dimensions of college life--are useful only insofar as they contribute to the usefulness of the product, the diploma.

Second, the traditional organization of college life fosters, even creates, a dualism between the academic and the social, structurally shouting that one's experience outside the classroom is not relevant to the work to be done inside the classroom. Witness the almost universal division between academic affairs and student affairs. The deans responsible for these domains rarely see themselves as having anything to talk with one another about, except in those cases where the behavior of a student or faculty in one domain disrupts the efficient functioning of the other. Residential colleges call this dualism into question and chafe against it by their very structure. Faculty are involved in student life and bring to that involvement all of their critical sensibilities. What is even more interesting and transformative are the ways in which student life traffics into the classroom and challenges traditional understandings of space and its appropriate uses.

Case in point: Students in one FYP college came to a plenary meeting having worked in small groups preparing interpretations of a selection of Hobbes. Spokespersons from each of the groups were to present their findings orally to the plenary, and the class agenda would have been constructed from these reports. Things were progressing in an orderly way when one speaker, Sam, took the podium and informed the college that he was not going to talk about Hobbes because "some ass had squirted a fire extinguisher through (his) key hole and had covered (his) stereo with foam." Sam had decided that this was the most pressing issue to engage the community at that time, and that the classroom was an appropriate space for this engagement.

In a traditional educational setting this outburst would be seen as highly inappropriate. But then, in a traditional educational setting it would hardly ever occur. The aggrieved student would take his complaint to the appropriate student affairs authorities and the issue probably would be resolved in a privative disciplinary manner. Sam would never think of bringing a personal problem up in a public space, especially where the relation to others in that space is thin and structured by a highly ritualized set of social norms.

In a residential college, however, social and academic space is less clearly defined, and the relation to those with whom one shares these spaces is thick with context and background. Now surely teaching in this environment calls for a kind of agility not demanded of faculty in traditional teaching settings. But the educational potential of this kind of trafficking is great. In this case, the faculty worked hard to open space for Sam's concern, eventually bringing the discussion back around to Hobbes, what his view of the situation might be, and the strengths and weaknesses of what his solutions might be. Here, then, is classroom experience that is not alienated or disengaged from the students' larger social experience. Suddenly Hobbes became highly relevant to an acute and immediate concern of the students in this college, and they subsequently figured out a resolution to this conflict by working through Hobbes to their own plan of how a community ought to contend with incivility.

Problem #4: American Pluralism and the Ideal of Community. The last point is the way in which residential colleges open a new window on the cultural and educational issues surrounding American pluralism. A traditional defense of general education is that it allows us to discover our common humanity, to realize the noble values implicit in our democratic community, and to take our place in the history of its progress. If we begin with the experience of our students, in ways that residential colleges make possible, we will see this vision of the purpose and dynamic of higher education to be inaccurate and harmful. The postulated commonality is inaccurate in that the notion of "our history," "our community" is and always has always has been an idealized academic construct. Our students do not come from any single, identifiable cultural tradition. If we look, if we ask them, what we will find is multiplicity; both within and between individuals there are multiple histories, traditions, values, and norms. The postulated commonality is harmful in that it inevitably excludes, and to exclude is to delegitimize.

What students experience, acutely, existentially, and in ways that demand to be named and negotiated, is difference. And the differences are multiple; gender, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, regional, political, and intellectual differences present themselves immediately in a residential college setting. These command the attention of the students as they seek to sort out how they are going to live together harmoniously and create for themselves individually a sense that they belong where they are. With this as the starting point, the raw material of residential colleges, genuine commonality and community exist only as potential to be realized through shared experience.

Case in point: Early in the fall semester, the residential staff of a FYP college reported that there were multiple tensions building within the college that were about to blow. Complex alliances were forming where, on some issues, gender was the defining quality, on others it was ethnicity, on others it was taste in popular culture, and on still others it was simply life-style habits. What is more, individuals found themselves allied with one group on one issue and with another group on another issue. In any case, the college was on the verge of coming apart.

The faculty and residential staff devised a strategy for working with the situation. Members of the college were called together for a "town meeting" and asked to articulate, anonymously in writing, the differences each found within the college, and to star those that were causing the most serious tensions. The list of problematic differences included the following:

1. The bathrooms, posted and intended for single-sex use, had, in practice, become co-ed. This was seen as progressive, liberal, and convenient by some members of the college, and intimidating or even immoral by others.
2. The decorations on some persons' doors and room walls were seen as offensive and degrading.
3. The kinds of music listened to by some persons offended, or at least annoyed, others.
4. The habits of alcohol use by some persons offended, or at least annoyed, others.
5. The hours respectively devoted to

studying, sleeping, and socializing varied widely, and this variety caused multiple tensions.

The college first discussed which of all the differences listed were to be celebrated in the sense that they made the college a richer, more interesting place to live. Tastes in dress and music, differences in politics and spirituality, were, after much discussion, seen to be the kinds of diversity that members of the college had reason to be grateful for. The next question was which of the differences listed needed to be tolerated, even if they were troubling or annoying to some, since they fell within what the college wanted to define as the rights of the members. Sexual preference and practice, hours kept, and personal habits of cleanliness and order were paradigmatic of this kind of difference. Room decorations ultimately fell in this category, though door decorations did not, since the outside of one's door is public space. The last question was which kinds of differences could not be tolerated because they undermined the possibility of harmonious cohabitation. Behavior was banned that they found intimidating or morally offensive, or that disrupted things they had a right to do, like sleep or study during hours determined by the college to be the norm for these kinds of activities. Also, bathroom use remained single-sex unless coed use was anonymously and unanimously ratified by members on a certain hall. Since doors and space outside of a room were public, no images or music that others found offensive or intimidating were to be allowed here.

Following this discussion, the college revisited an earlier section of the course where they read and discussed theories of community. They then constructed a collaborative social contract that would govern their lives together. This social contract had to include an understanding of the rights of the majority and the minority on specific issues and mechanisms for adjudicating conflicts not specified within, or violations of, the contract.

What is important is not the substance of the students' deliberations or the social contract they came up with, but the process they engaged in. In response to the necessities of their shared life, and by calling forth and applying insights gleaned from texts dealing with issues of power, race, gender, and community, they made a stab at collectively negotiating their differences. The result of this process produced a sense of community, not, of course, one that functioned smoothly or that was without conflict, but at least one in which questions of mutuality and accountability were part of the public discourse.

Residential colleges, then, have the potential to help students develop the ability to recognize and respect differences, to understand the roots and meaning of those differences, and most importantly, to work cooperatively with persons fundamentally different from themselves. They provide the context within which students can experience and reflect upon the joys and tensions of community. As students struggle with the difficulties of seeking community through negotiating difference, of balancing tolerance for difference with accountability for behavior which is not to be tolerated, they are engaging some of the issues that lie at the heart of contemporary American culture.

Conclusion

Curricular-based residential colleges, on the model of the FYP, have at least the structural potential to address some of the most pressing problems facing the academy today. They are not an educational panacea; they are not the only structure that promotes valuable teaching and learning, and where they succeed they succeed modestly. Their power lies in their capacity to enable students to integrate those aspects of college life and curriculum that are often made artificially distinct, to realize connections between disciplines, between the development of voice, critical thinking and intellectual identity, and most importantly, between the intellectual inquiry that begins in the classroom and the personal and social choices they make in their lives together.

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Making Connections: The Mission of UNCG's Residential College

FRANCES ARNDT

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Recently, university faculty and students have enjoyed the justly acclaimed film version of E. M. Forster's *Howard's End* which was unusually faithful to its literary source. The film used scenes of great beauty to develop the epigraph Forster used to preface his novel: "Only connect..." While readers, critics, and literature professors have their own definitions of what Forster meant by this, few deny the need to make connections. What holds things together is what gives pattern and meaning to our experiences. In times of transition and change, connections are the source of stabilizing values and identity. Finding those connections is not always easy. Like artists, educators try to see and reveal to others connections that offer possibility of such meaning.

The concept of the residential college, a place of community for new students at a university or other institution of higher learning, has traditionally been concerned with the goal of aiding students and other participants in connecting their past with a new present, their private concerns with the demands of an academic program, and their individual education with the education of others. The Residential College of University of North Carolina at Greensboro has changed in significant ways since it was opened in 1970, but it has remained committed to the mission of helping students make vital connections as a foundation to their academic careers and to their lives.

The need for facilitating connections is perhaps most evident in times of change. Begun in 1892 as a school for preparing women to be teachers, the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial School became a college in 1897 and was renamed Women's College of the University of North Carolina in 1931. It began admitting men and received its current name in 1963.

> *The need for facilitating connections is perhaps most evident in times of change.*

In 1970, the Dean of the Arts and Sciences College, Robert Miller, and a colleague from the Philosophy Department, Warren Ashby, opened the Residential College. This special program offered freshmen and sophomores experimental ways of learning and living in an academic community. The ancient British university influenced this undertaking and was reflected in the title given to the academic assistant to the director in these early years: Master.

Less symbolic, but more important in substance, was the idea that education should address the whole student, the whole community of scholars and teachers, and should prepare each student not only for a major, but also for living and learning with others for the rest of his or her life. The Residential College was thus a connection between the new, diverse university, with its emphasis on professional preparation, and the historic Women's College that had looked to personalized education in fields traditionally associated with social service. This connection may not have been intentional or even recognized at the time, but in its insistence that education should have a liberal foundation, regardless of major, and in its attempt to unite curriculum with social issues, the program has continued to promote these goals.

By bringing some of their past with them and sharing it with others, students often enrich the entire community and give education the personal face often overlooked by texts and lectures.

A second form of connection was recognized early, one that was personal rather than institutional or theoretic. Clearly the first year of college is a major period of transition for the student; for many it marks the important break with childhood dependence on parents; for all it marks a chance to form a new identity. A residential college should be sensitive both to the need on the part of some students to redefine themselves and to the need of others to feel that they have not lost their old identity and life. Probably almost all first-year students feel both, though they may not always recognize these seemingly opposite feelings.

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The program at UNCG has sought to give all participants the opportunity to make choices that will affect themselves and others. Thus many of the functions of the program are essentially determined and executed by the students. A complex system of student committees has evolved that addresses all important aspects of their life, from dormitory concerns to race and human relations issues. Students co-chair all committees but curriculum, and even in curriculum, course suggestions are solicited from students and course descriptions often extensively edited by them. Even acceptance to the Residential College is determined primarily by the decisions of a student membership committee.

Small seminar classes, various social and communal events, and the day-to-day interaction of all participants lets the freshman know at once that he or she is important and that education is largely a product of the individual's choice and efforts. At the same time, by providing a close-knit community, the program tries to make the transition from home to campus less traumatic for the student who dislikes change. Individuals are encouraged to share their own interests and the activities from their homes that meant the most to them. A memorable example of this occurred when one freshman publicly lit his first Hanukkah candle away from his parents' home and explained to the community the deep meaning of this ritual. By bringing some of their past with them and sharing it with others, students often enrich the entire community and give education the personal face often overlooked by texts and lectures.

The residential college experience is based on the recognition that the student grows as an individual in relation to a larger academic and social community. Students at UNCG's Residential College have very few requirements that are universal; the only one that is not determined by academic needs is that each student serves on a hall committee. Those who fail to sign up are relentlessly hunted down and required to volunteer. Like all community service, much of the real work is done by a dedicated minority; however, all are expected to serve in some capacity. If a standing committee does not exist that matches students' interests or talents, they are free to be innovative. Last year a music major formed a Residential College Choir that performed in the building, on the larger campus, and in the community at places such as nursing homes. The choir is now a subcommittee of the Arts Committee, as are the Parlour Theater and the literary magazine staff.

Faculty are also encouraged to participate in activities that transcend the classroom, such as communal meals, talent shows, poetry readings, and some activities just for fun. For years a faculty team has held its own against student teams in a Residential College Bowl, though at times it has very narrowly escaped defeat. Students, on the other hand, regularly rout their faculty opponents in Win, Lose, or Draw tournaments.

A semi-annual weekend trip to a retreat center in the North Carolina mountains allows members of the community to get to know one another in a very different setting. Shared meals, hikes along mountain trails, square dances, poetry readings, and bonfires are regular activities, but the evenings of singing and the afternoons of long discussions on a porch overlooking the nearby valley highlight the memories of most. Student alumni have been known to travel long distances to attend this retreat and renew their own Residential College past.

The recurring participation of alumni is one of the richest testaments to the lasting importance of this pattern of education. This generally takes two forms. Former members who are still in the university are invited to become formal members of RCA, the Residential College Alums; if they pay a small fee to facilitate the paper work of meeting announcements and to help support worthy projects, they are issued a member card that gives them access to the hall at all times (other non-residents must be invited to have access beyond the lobby) and are informed of all activities by means of the weekly bulletin. These "old but still around" members help promote the community's interest, help new students feel part of an ongoing tradition, and boost morale with bagel breaks to initiate final examinations or with bags of treats to sustain students during this ordeal. The Residential College has produced over 1000 alumni, many of whom stay in touch with the program through the biannual alumni newsletter, through class reunions held in May of each year, and through many diverse and informal networks of friendship. Recently a letter was posted describing the life of one of the graduates from the first years of the Residential College. He has recently adopted four young children and taken a job directing a cancer clinic on a Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. A current student who was feeling restless under the structured requirements of the university and reading Thoreau with the passion of a new convert to "different drummers" found in this account reasons to remain in school. Unanticipated connections are often the most important.

[M]embership in this community has helped people not only to live better, but also to accept loss.

Finally, there is a way in which membership in this community has helped people not only to live better, but also to accept loss, even death. Years ago a member diagnosed with melanoma visited several of his friends from the program, including faculty. He was saying good-bye, but more importantly verifying the importance of friendship and faith in his own life. More recently, when a 1985 graduate was killed in a car accident, many of his friends held an informal memorial gathering in the large parlor of the hall where most of them had attended classes and meetings when they were part of the Residential College. In a tribute in the newsletter one of his close friends noted that "this memorial may sound as much like a tribute to Residential College as it is to Rick, but in many ways, the two are almost inseparable. Rick grew up to be the person he was largely because of RC's influence on him. In turn, Mary Foust [Hall] continues to evolve because of Rick's involvement with the program." She also stressed the connections of people over the years by noting that "[we] are all part of a cycle of learning and growth that hopefully will never cease."

Although learning to share lives may be the most lasting form of education, the traditional goal of higher education—to introduce students to important ideas of their own and other cultures and to encourage them to ask fundamental questions, think logically, solve problems, and seek after wisdom—was always a part of the Residential College.

Although learning to share lives may be the most lasting form of education, the traditional goal of higher education—to introduce students to important ideas of their own and other cultures and to encourage them to ask fundamental questions, think logically, solve problems, and seek after wisdom—was always a part of the Residential College. The report assessment of the program, submitted by a review committee four years after its establishment, noted that it attempted to "integrate separate and/or opposing aspects of university life, e.g., academic and social life, activities of students and faculty, humanities and science studies, and the individual (faculty and student) with the community" (Report of the Ad Hoc Committee, p. 1).

That the academic experience of all participants of the community is central to its function has always been taken for granted. From its inception, the Residential College of UNCG has had an academic base. Students take 30 hours during their first two years in courses offered by the program and taught in the residence hall. These courses meet the general liberal education requirements of all university students and also have internal coherence. The challenge from year to year is to create and sustain a curriculum that is innovative in both form and content, yet central enough to the general requirements of the university to prepare students with basic skills in reasoning and composition and with information that can serve as foundation for a variety of majors.

It is an ironic but fairly common component of the freshman year that at the same time a student is exposed to a new living environment, he or she is also placed in a set of courses that have nothing in common except to meet some basic university requirement. A typical freshman selection includes English Composition, a natural science with a lab, a foreign language at a level determined by a competency exam, a mathematics course similarly determined, and some universally required course such as Western Civilization. These classes have no obvious connection; superficially they are merely harder versions of classes already taken in high school and are offered in large, impersonal settings.

The Residential College tries to meet these problems in two ways. First, it has only one mandatory course: a four-semester course in American Studies taught by faculty from different disciplines, combining both interdisciplinary lectures and small, discipline-oriented seminars. It is a course in ideas and values, with a strong emphasis on history and literature. Freshmen and sophomores are together in all classes. Because ideas rather than events dominate, chronology is less a problem than in other survey-like courses. Students who begin their two-year cycle with the course that begins in 1890 are not at a disadvantage. By placing the issues, tensions, and important ideas of American experience at the center of the curriculum, students are shown that their own culture is deeply dependent on the past and that they must examine its philosophical, religious, and ethical dimensions if they are to know who they are now.

In order to encourage students to make connections among their classes, the Residential College offers other seminars that are related in either subject matter or time to the currently offered semester of the American Studies course. Also, skills courses such as basic English Composition are frequently connected to the course in the themes assigned for writing. The most important factor encouraging connections in course experiences is that the students know one another.

Service to the larger community has also been a goal of the program. A seminar in service-learning allows students to work in selected community volunteer programs, structure their internships, report on what they learn, and earn elective credits. Often, individual seminars also require active involvement in the Greensboro community; for example, sections of the required course taught by members together with the Social Work Department usually involve hands-on experience with social problems. Thus the Residential College tries to help students connect their education to life beyond the campus. Members are also active in university groups, especially those that address concerns they have studied in the college: environmental issues, the conditions of women, racial relations, and poverty.

Though small in terms of the number of students it serves, Residential College has proven to be prophetic of trends later adopted by the larger institution. The original core course included one year of European culture, which later was the basis for the University's required two semester course in Western Civilization. Currently discussions are underway to initiate other residence-based programs. Administrators and faculty alike begin to acknowledge the importance of the first year in a student's college career—no good first year, often no future career.

UNCG's Residential College has a dual mission distinct from many first-year programs: to create a smooth transition from secondary school to university life for entering students and to integrate them into the larger two-year (and more) community. This connection between the freshmen and sophomores has two benefits: the freshman students gain from the experiences of those just ahead of them (whom they often trust more than professional advisors and counselors) and the sophomores can see how much they have matured and enjoy the sense of being useful to others. This means that new students never feel set apart, limited by their status as "freshmen." From the day they arrive at the hall they are members of an ongoing community, sharing classes, committee assignments, and other activities. Being recognized as potential friends and mentors helps sophomores avoid the "slump" that often comes in the second year, an uncomfortable time for many who have discovered that they can survive college life but are still not deeply involved in specific majors. By encouraging the sophomores and the small group of upperclassmen who return as official counselors to feel at least partly responsibility for the progress of the freshmen, the Residential College taps the best source of energy for making connections: the students themselves.

The Residential College is where the connection between a small liberal arts college and a large state institution is found.

The Residential College is where the connection between a small liberal arts college and a large state institution is found. A recruiting brochure opens like a French door down the center and asks the question, "Torn between a large state university and a small college?" and answers inside that "the Residential College of UNCG offers the best of both worlds." In fact, such a program does allow students to have their education both ways. They enter a relatively small, co-educational residential community where small seminar-type classes are offered by faculty who want them to ask questions and will know their names early in the term.

New students also have the very real assets that come with enrollment at a large research institution with Division I athletics and diverse student activities. While attending the university, the students themselves are seldom aware that they are recipients of a unique education. Later, however, when they return for visits and reunions, they affirm how important the Residential College has been in their lives, and they affirm that they still feel connected to those first years.

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Putting the College Back in the University

JERRY A. STARK

8

In recent years, there has been widespread criticism of higher education, generally, and general education programs specifically (Association of American Colleges, 1985; Boyer, 1988; Boyer and Levine, 1981; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1977; Gaff, 1983; Levine, 1978). Many who take such criticisms seriously focus on the character of the undergraduate experience of learning rather than upon the impact or addition of specific courses in a formal curriculum (Astin, 1977; Boyer, 1988; Gaff, 1970; Gaff, 1983; Gamson, 1984; Pace, 1979; Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood, & Bavry, 1975; Winston, Bonney, Miller, Dagley, 1988). One conclusion of this literature is that the curriculum must be understood in relation to the "extra-curriculum," the global, interpersonally-grounded experience of the learning environment.

This recent emphasis upon the extra-curriculum harkens back to an earlier generation of research on the social organization of higher learning (Clark & Trow, 1966; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Newcomb, 1943; Pace & Baird, 1966; Sanford, 1962; Stafford, 1963; Wallace, 1963, 1966). The focus of this research is on the relationship between the typical characteristics of students (beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors) and the typical characteristics of colleges and universities (culture and structure). A mediating factor in the relationship between individuals and organizations in this literature is the peer culture manifest in the experiences of identifiable groups of students on specific campuses (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Sanford, 1962)

The literature, both on general education and on the sociology of higher education, underscores the importance of the first-year experience for socializing students to the university.

The literature, both on general education and on the sociology of higher education, underscores the importance of the first-year experience for socializing students to the university (Gamson, 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). It is not surprising, therefore, that recent efforts to focus institutional efforts on first-year students have gained increased visibility and credibility (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989), and programs for first-year students are both numerous and diverse (Fidler &

Fidler, 1991; Smith & Hodge, 1991; Upcraft & Gardner, 1989; Washington Center, 1991; Zeller, Fidler, & Barefoot, 1991).

The intersection of the ideas of peer culture and academic preparation takes form in the concept of a learning community. The notion of a community of learners presumes a set of interactional and institutional arrangements which give rise to purposively-organized, academically-oriented activities of students and faculty (Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, & Smith, 1990; Gamson, 1984; Winston, Bonney, Miller, & Dagley, 1988). Learning communities assume forms that are as varied as programs for first-year students.

An Analysis of First-Year Programs

Using the literature on the sociology of higher education as a foundation, it is possible to examine programs for first-year students and learning communities in light of two intersecting continua: (1) a text - context continuum, and (2) a course - curriculum continuum. The text/context refers to whether a program for first-year students centers upon the transmission of information contained in texts or whether that program is directed to larger contexts outside of the formal curriculum. The course/curriculum refers to whether the program is centered on a specific course or series of courses in the fashion of a curriculum. The intersection of these continua provides a convenient analytical scheme with four "types."

Type I. This type of program represents text- and course-centered programs or communities of learners. Programs of this type are represented by freshman seminars that focus on a set of texts. The purpose of such a seminar is to form a common experience among freshman students that is grounded in "great books," however these might be defined. This approach tends to be favored by faculty who define education in course-specific and text-centered terms.

Type II. This type of program represents an approach in which a Type I program is generalized over a series of courses. It is text- and curriculum-centered. The classical ideal of the trivium and quadrivium represent this form of "common learning," and is today best represented by the core curricula in small liberal arts colleges.

Type III. These programs are context and course-centered. They focus upon specific courses but address the contexts of educational experiences, or the "extra-curriculum." This model is evident in the Freshman Seminar, or "University 101" model, which aims comprehensively to develop a student's ability to become successful in college.

Type IV. Programs of this type incorporate context- and curriculum-centered interventions for first-year students. They are best illustrated by programs that link the curricular and extra-curricular aspects of collegiate life within a residential environment. The classical "college" model comes to mind here.

This brief typological analysis of first-year programs allows us to recognize key differences between these types of programs. Type I and II programs both presume that the essential aim of a university education, or a first-year program for students, is the transmission of information. Such programs effectively define learning in narrow terms. Types III and IV represent programs which presume that the purpose of higher learning, and of first-year programs, is not simply the transmission of information by also the transformation of character. Such programs effectively define learning in more comprehensive terms.

This analysis also allows us to link different strategies for first-year programs to substantive sociological propositions that might be useful in determining which program might be most effective in specific university setting. The following proposition is derived from the literature on the sociology of higher education:

1. In universities with relatively fragmented general education curricula and where there is little coherent

"academic culture," first-year programs should emphasis context-centered interventions.

2. In universities with relatively integrated general education curricula and where there is significant "academic culture," first-year programs can emphasis content-centered interventions.

Placing these propositions in practical context, the character of first-year programs depends on the context of the problem they address. Problems at small liberal arts colleges are different from those at larger universities. The assumption here is that academic communities — learning communities — are not "natural" features of the environment in larger state universities, especially among first-year students. It is there one finds fragmented general education requirements and substantial differences in the levels of academic preparation among students. It is there one is also likely to find little common academic culture among either the students or the faculty (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Gaff, 1970, 1983, 1991; Gamson, 1984; Heath, 1977; Levine, 1978). In academic environments such as these, learning communities must be purposively created.

The University Learning Community at University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

These considerations led to the formation of a residentially-based liberal arts program for first-year students at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, a comprehensive state university with 11,000 students. Two-hundred thirty students voluntarily enrolled in this program in the fall semesters of 1987 and 1988 (all students admitted to the university were eligible for the program). The University Learning Community (ULC) was initially funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education (FIPSE). It is currently funded by a combination of student fees and university program funds.

Students in the program live together in a specially-designed residential area in a high-rise residence hall which has a special computer lab. A Resident Mentor and two Resident Tutors live in the community to assist the students with academic and personal transitions during their first year. ULC students are enrolled as cohorts rather than as individuals in a set of liberal arts courses that are part of the university's general education requirements.

These students also participate in a unique weekly colloquium that emphasizes active student participation in the cultural and intellectual life of the campus. Students also participate in a series of special orientation programs that emphasize the formation of community as well as communication and problem-solving skills. The project is located on the top two floors of a ten-story, high-rise residence hall specifically because this site is considered the most difficult possible "test" for the project.

From the beginning, the ULC project incorporated systematic program evaluation. To determine the existence of selection effects, extensive background information was gathered on the social and academic backgrounds of the ULC students and their families; similar information was gathered for a control group. No differences were found between students in the project and those in the control with respect to social background or involvement in high school extracurricular activities. ULC students were academically less prepared than their counterparts. Composite ACT scores for students in the ULC were significantly lower than those of their counterparts, and the ULC students also had significantly lower average high-school class rankings. This was true both for the ULC memberships as a whole and for the subgroup of minority students in the community.

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Program Outcomes

Systematic evaluation research (Stark, 1989; Stark & Johnson, 1992) compared educational outcomes for students in the learning community and a control group of first-year students who lived in the same residence hall. Complete data are available for the first two years of the program. A summary of the statistically significant differences between the ULC group and the control group for this period is presented below:

1. Students in the ULC program were significantly more likely than students in the control group to report higher levels of involvement in both academic and cultural activities.
2. Students in the ULC were more likely than the control group students to discuss with each other what they had addressed in the classroom.
3. Students in the ULC program reported that they wrote more formal papers, read more books, and generally reported higher academic workloads and hours spent studying than did their counterparts in the control group.
4. ULC students had a more positive view of their college education and a greater sense of personal gain from their college experiences than did members of the control group.
5. Grade point averages for ULC were slightly lower than their counterparts for the first semester, though the differences diminished in subsequent semesters; ULC students also completed more credits in their first year than did their counterparts.
6. The first-to-third semester retention for the university was 71%. The comparable figures of the ULC were 85% and 88% in the first two years of the program. The retention rate for ULC students who completed their first two semesters in the program was 97%.
7. The first-to-third semester retention rate for minority students in the university was 65%. The comparable figure for minority students in the learning community was 100%.

Conclusion

Those who have examined the social context of learning and who recognize the effects of the culture of learning recognize the importance of expectations embedded in peer culture and the importance of the first year as a socializing experience that has persistent, if not determinant, effects (Gamson 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Pascarella, Terenzini, & Hibel, 1978; Thistlewaite & Wheeler, 1966; Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood, & Bavry, 1975; Upcraft & Gardner, 1991). The development of the first-year programs at colleges and universities has become a common response to widespread problems of educational socialization and organization.

These programs assume many specific forms, though they tend to fall within one of four general types of determined by text - context and course - curriculum dimensions of first-year programs. The University Learning Community program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh offers one model of a context-centered, curriculum-centered program for first-year students that has had considerable success in dealing with the problems of social isolation, the lack of academic culture, curricular fragmentation, and retention typical of a comprehensive state university.

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Outgrow the Place . . . but Not the Faculty: Introducing Freshmen to Resident Faculty Communities

Kristine E. Dillon

9

The University of Southern California has sponsored resident faculty programs since the early 1980s. The goal of the residential college is to extend the influence of faculty and the academic experience into the student residential space in order to create an increased sense of community at the university. This goal was initially realized with a program in which honors freshmen not only live with resident faculty but are introduced to additional resident faculty programs in which they can choose to live following their freshman year. USC's programs have expanded to include two residential colleges, smaller resident faculty programs in university-owned student apartment complexes, and a proposed system of resident faculty advisors in fraternities and sororities.

The majority of USC students live in a residence hall for their freshman year and move into university or privately-owned housing in subsequent years. Given this tradition, the first comprehensive effort in 1983 to introduce students to resident faculty programs targeted the freshman year. The program offered entering freshman students with an honors designation the opportunity to reside in Deans' Hall. Now nearly a decade old, the program has served an important role in the planned transition of USC's residential community from essentially an academically dissolute student ghetto into a coordinated environment of student and faculty colleagues.

Students recruited to live in Deans' Hall are among the top 20% of their incoming class academically. Historically, about half of the students eligible for the program have accepted the invitation to be part of Deans' Hall. Those choosing the program are assigned to two adjacent buildings that together house 300 students and two faculty. The faculty live year round in apartments, and the students reside in traditional double-occupancy rooms that are coed by floor. Generally 85% of the residents are freshmen.

> *Faculty presence in the residential lives of undergraduates has a subtle but salutary impact: it creates the climate for self-motivated exploration of the academy.*

Programmatically, Deans' Hall serves as a primary connection for students with their various USC learning and social experiences. While small classes could be taught within the residential facility, especially by the faculty who live there, academic offerings do not typically characterize the students' link with the program. Rather, their connections are made through social or cultural activities and by community service opportunities. Even a student who moves from the Deans' Hall to live in another resident faculty community, a fraternity, a sorority, or an apartment, typically retains important connections to activities and friendships that originate during their Deans' Hall residency.

Prior to the inception of Deans' Hall, university residence halls provided important introductions to campus life and university expectations. But it was clear that fraternities and sororities provided the most visible and lasting social connections and structures. This was the case even though not more than 20% of USC's undergraduate student body has been Greek-affiliated.

Deans' Hall has played a significant role in the establishment of lasting communities for students because it, like fraternities and sororities, has provided strong social connections. Students come together for building-wide outings and service projects, often organized by or at least involving their resident faculty and associated nonresident faculty. Furthermore, these students' commitment to academic achievement has not only linked them with one another but also has drawn the continuing support and interest of the faculty. Students from Deans' Hall cite their identification with the program in much the same way they or others would acknowledge membership in a social fraternity or sorority. However, they have the added advantage of receiving faculty approval for their affiliation.

This model effectively blends the university's academic value system within a living community that allows the student to affiliate with the larger university on a personal scale. The need for an active mix of social experiences has long been reflected in the large array of student organizations on USC's campus and the historically high profile of the fraternity and sorority system. USC's student culture shows signs of change, however, and recent research by Astin (1993) cites some interesting findings on students' perceptions of student-oriented faculty that may relate to the changing culture. Private universities, while having strong positive effects on students' perceptions of their university's strength of resources and reputation, may have negative effects on students' perceptions of the degree to which the faculty are student-oriented (Astin, 1993). Strong positive effects on the "student-oriented faculty" variable are associated with student-faculty interactions such as talking with faculty outside class or being a guest in a faculty member's home. Additionally, Astin (1993) cites a weak negative effect on this variable: a student's membership in a social fraternity or sorority.

The evidence is that the student satisfaction with college is linked with living away from home (Astin, 1993) and college's overall impact is most visible among those who live on campus (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Resident faculty programs at USC work to increase students' positive experience of the faculty as oriented to students. Furthermore, these programs address students' needs for an organized student community and for opportunities for involvement and leadership. In this way, USC's emerging resident faculty programs are addressing student life issues in many of the same ways that fraternities and sororities have historically at USC.

After the first-year Deans' Hall experience, many residents move to other resident faculty programs or to university owned apartment near campus (often as trained resident advisors with special responsibilities for academic enrichment or non-resident faculty programs), a few move into fraternities or sororities joined during their freshman year, and another small number move to private housing near campus. There is a clear preference among these students for one another's continued company and for the programs that have goals similar to those in Deans' Hall: connections with faculty associated with the residential community and a sense of leadership and participation within the university.

Beyond knowing that their faculty participate in their living environment and are not strangers to its enrichment programs, these students have come to see the involved faculty and staff as multidimensional people.

An example of this ongoing relationship is the five-year tradition of the residents of Deans' Hall organizing, choreographing, and arranging the music for championship entries in USC's annual Songfest. Current and former residents work together to produce successful performances without overrepresentation by music and theatre majors. Prior to the resident faculty-based programs, USC's Songfest was dominated by fraternity and sorority entries; there were no residence-based entries that survived the first talent review. Today, in addition to the Deans' Hall entry, there are successful entries from Embassy Residential College and from resident advisors.

Beyond successes in the broader campus social community, the Deans' Hall programs provide a physical link for outreach from academic units. A substantial number of the residents elect to satisfy their general education requirements by enrolling in Thematic Option, an honors interdisciplinary general education program. The academic program administrators coordinate with the residence team so that students fully benefit from speakers and other aspects of their Thematic Option enrollment. Similar efforts are made by the Engineering School to interact with the Deans' Hall program; the Engineering School has a significant number of freshman majors in residence at Deans' Hall. Faculty and staff from these academic programs also serve as non-resident fellows supporting the activities of the Deans' Hall program.

These comfortable liaisons between the residential program and academic units are not lost on the student residents. Beyond knowing that their faculty participate in their living environment and are not strangers to its enrichment programs, these students have come to see the involved faculty and staff as multidimensional people. For example, the associate dean of engineering who annually invites Deans' Hall residents for a weekend to his mountain cabin during ski season has signaled to these freshmen that faculty have interests in life beyond the classroom. The biology professor resident in an upper class program who annually leads a whale-watching trip for the Deans' Hall residents makes evident his passion for marine biology. His is an outing the students appreciate whether or not they study advanced biology in their formal curriculum. However, many of them may well base their choice of living community for the next year on his gregarious and approachable personality.

Faculty, too, find Deans' Hall and other well-developed living groups at USC to be a source of valuable connection to the university. As with most complex research universities, the opportunities for interaction with colleagues outside one's own academic sphere are few. Faculty have not only enriched the students' university experience but have deepened their own connections by establishing collegial relationships with involved faculty from other disciplines; many are leading supporters of the movement at USC to develop more residential colleges.

The regular contact of faculty with students outside the classroom results in greater opportunities for students to understand the values of the academic community.

The regular contact of faculty with students outside the classroom results in greater opportunities for students to understand the values of the academic community. Often, faculty who would otherwise be daunted by the logistics of organizing an informal presentation or outing will happily respond to the request of a resident faculty colleague to speak to a small group of residents about current scholarship, undergraduate research opportunities, graduate school, or personal hobbies. While student interest varies with the subject matter, there is no doubt that more students have been positively contacted by faculty and other speakers through this "piggybacking" on the relationships they have already established with their faculty residents. Given the wealth of intellectual resources associated with a research university and a major urban center, the planned increase in the contact between students and these senior scholars is an important goal for the Deans' Hall and other faculty programs.

With the contributions of the Deans' Hall program well established at the University of Southern California, attention is now being turned to the expansion of resident faculty contact. Additionally, the concept of multi-year residency in a traditional residential facility has been successfully introduced at the upper division level with Embassy Residential College, located in an historic beaux arts hotel several miles from campus, purchased and renovated by the university in 1989.

In 1993, a new residential college is opening; it houses 450 undergraduates and all admitted freshmen are eligible applicants. This brings the total number of such spaces offered to new students to 1,040, half of all resident freshmen. Following the phased development of this newest residential college project, USC plans to introduce more resident faculty into its fraternity and sorority system. In addition to the current resident faculty fellow in the Greek Honors House, the university anticipates many of the individual chapter houses will participate in the emerging USC model of an increased presence of resident faculty.

Why is it important to expand these programs? Faculty presence in the residential lives of undergraduates has a subtle but salutary impact: it creates the climate for self-motivated exploration of the academy. Students experience faculty in general as more approachable personally, which extends to their approachability on coursework and research. Those connections are not made by all affected students to all faculty, but USC's experience over the past decade with the Deans' Hall and subsequent resident faculty communities is that these connections enrich the quality of the academic community for both constituencies.

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"You Save Our Academic Lives"*

KATIE DUSTIN

CHRIS MURCHISON

10

What does it mean to integrate living and learning? Colleges and universities across the nation use the term, have developed programs under the rubric, and, like the Residential Programs Department at the University of California at Berkeley, include it in mission and goal statements. But what does it mean to first-year students, and what does this academic integration look like at a multi-ethnic, richly diverse, highly competitive institution? These and other issues are covered in the following description of University of California at Berkeley's Residential Learning Project, a program which incorporates academic services into residence hall life.

Campus Climate

University of California at Berkeley, locally known as "Cal," is a large (over 31,000 students) urban campus situated in northern California within minutes of San Francisco and Oakland, cities which offer both a wealth of cultural diversity as well as the high crime rates often associated with major urban locales. These realities contribute to everyday life on the Berkeley Campus. Add to them the University's rigorous academic reputation, separation from home for perhaps the first time, and the impersonality that often accompanies a large public school, and one can see that coming to Cal can be easily overwhelming for the first-year student.

Students can feel inundated if they think they must manage their academic careers alone. It can take new students several months to learn about on-campus support services that can help them deal with many aspects of their freshman transition, such as how to choose appropriate classes, where to go for information on health and safety, and whom to approach if there are concerns about racial diversity on campus. Lack of knowledge about such campus resources can lead

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**Anonymous student quote taken from an Academic Center Survey, Fall, 1991, University of California, Berkeley. (Lines within text indicate student quotes taken from USC Academic Center semester surveys of residents who utilize the centers.)*

to feelings of disconnectedness with the campus environment and can result in students being isolated, alone, and feeling that a viable option is to drop out of school.

Freshman retention, particularly of underrepresented minority students, is of concern to the University of California at Berkeley. One in every seven students and one in every five minority students in the freshman class do not continue on to their sophomore year (Duster, 1991). Several studies have been commissioned at Berkeley to look at the climate for undergraduates and what can be done to smooth the transition for new students. These studies acknowledge the multitude of challenges that undergraduates face at the University of California at Berkeley. For example, the Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body (Maslach, 1991) found that first-year students' course schedules consisted mainly of large lectures taught by faculty with small labs and discussion sections taught by graduate students. This study recommended increasing the number of small classes and lower division seminars offered so that students would have more direct interaction with professors. In fall 1992, over 100 such seminars were initiated, all taught by tenured faculty and limited to freshmen and sophomores.

The same study recommended greater use of peer advising for answering routine questions about core curriculum requirements, administrative deadlines, and related topics. As a result, eight peer advisors now staff portable booths located at well-traveled sections of campus. Both of these recommendations and numerous others from related studies and conferences reflect the fact that students at Berkeley compete for the individual attention of faculty and staff in many places: large lectures, office hours, college advising centers, and elsewhere.

The impersonal climate of a large public university is not uncommon. What is unusual about Berkeley is that positive steps have been and continue to be taken to promote a sense of belonging and community for first-year students.

The Residential Learning Project: Rationale and Inception

In 1987, discussions began on how to promote the academic aspect of residence hall living. As a result, a new program was created: the Residential Learning Project. The goal of the Residential Learning Project (RLP) is to improve the rate of student retention and persistence to graduation by creating a living-learning environment for incoming freshmen that promotes their academic success and social/psychological adjustment to Berkeley. The RLP addresses the challenges of a large and impersonal university by bringing academic support services into the residence halls where 90% of new students live.

The short term goal of the RLP is to create an environment where students can become self-directed and successful learners and thereby to enhance their academic and social integration into university life. First-year students often do not take advantage of on-campus academic and support services that would help them cope with the university environment for several reasons: they have not heard about the services; they are not accustomed to needing help; or there is a social stigma attached to needing help of any sort. As a result, students leave school because of problems (including poor academic performance, discomfort with the environment, or lack of motivation or interest in their studies) that might have been addressed had they used existing campus resources (Wilson, 1989). The RLP believes that if the student's home environment is psychologically supportive, intellectually exciting, and conducive to academic success, first-year students, especially at-risk students, are more likely to be integrated into the larger university environment and to become autonomous learners.

In 1989, after two years of planning and construction, the first tangible component of the

RLP was realized: the opening of an Academic Center at one of the six residence complexes on the the University of California at Berkeley campus. This complex, called Unit 3, currently houses approximately 1,200 students in five buildings. The basement floor of the central building was renovated to accommodate the Academic Center's facilities.

A second Academic Center was opened in 1991 at a newly- constructed residence hall complex called Foothill. This Center serves the needs of an additional 1,200 students. Also in 1991, outreach services were begun at the remaining residence hall units without Academic Centers. Residents of these units were provided with on-site tutoring services, advising, faculty programs, and courses.

> "*[The Academic Center is] one of the only things that make me glad I have to live in the dorms next year.*"

The Residential Learning Project: The Academic Center Model

Each Academic Center is managed by an Academic Program Coordinator (APC), a full-time professional staff person who is responsible for hiring, training, and supervising all Academic Center staff and coordinating the five component areas of the Academic Center. The five areas are tutoring, computers, advising, courses/seminars/workshops, and faculty involvement programs.

Tutoring. Each Academic Center employs tutors in the areas of writing/rhetoric, chemistry, math, and physics--areas determined to be those most in demand and needed by lower division students. Tutoring is offered in the evenings on a drop-in basis and is mostly individual.

Tutors are both graduate and undergraduate students at Berkeley who are selected for their previous tutoring and group living experience. By having lived in a residence hall themselves, tutors are able to relate to the residential experience of their students. To further their interaction with students, tutors are required to eat dinner with residents one night a week and offer one non-tutoring program each year, called a "TutorTalk." The purpose of these activities is for residents to view tutors as well-rounded fellow students and not just as specialists in their fields.

Supplementing the staff tutors are volunteer tutors. Most volunteers live in the residence hall in which they tutor, which makes it possible to offer tutoring in units without Academic Centers. Subjects offered through volunteers, ranging from economics and statistics to art history and foreign languages, greatly broaden the scope of assistance available to residents without impacting costs.

> "Comment about a staff tutor: "*Awesome tutor, student, TA, friend, and physicist! He is vital to physics students. His consummate knowledge of the subject is inspirational.*"

Computers. Each Academic Center houses a fully-equipped Computer Center to meet the word processing and programming needs of residents. The Computer Centers are open afternoons and evenings an average of 50 hours per week. The main goal of the Computer Centers is education. Student staff are always available to assist users, answer questions, troubleshoot equipment, and give one-on-one tutorials. Group instruction is also emphasized, and a series of workshops, available free to residents, is offered throughout the year on various introductory topics to help students better utilize the Center's software.

> "*The Computer Center is absolutely wonderful and great because it gives those who live in the residence halls who do not own or who cannot afford a computer a chance to use the best paper-writing tool in the world.*"

Advising. Lines can be long and appointments few for students seeking academic advice at the beginning of each semester. Students in the largest college at Cal, the College of Letters and Science, often become frustrated by the lengthy wait to see an advisor. To combat this frustration, the Academic Centers bring advisors to the residence halls for drop-in office hours. Advisors offer drop-in advising several times each semester in the evenings. Their visits are scheduled to coincide with administrative deadlines for choosing, adding, and dropping courses.

Advisors from other campus departments are also invited to the Academic Centers several times each year to hold drop-in office hours or offer programs in the evenings. Staff advisors from the Pre-graduate and Professional School Advising Office offer workshops on how to prepare for graduate school; peer advisors from the campus health service and career planning center staff tables loaded with descriptive and informational brochures; and counselors from financial aid and psychological services offer drop-in advising.

In addition to these programs, each Academic Program Coordinator holds office hours and is available by appointment every week to meet with individuals or groups of students who seek assistance on such topics as course selection, writing effective papers, time management strategies, and a host of other concerns. The APCs are well-connected on campus and therefore also able to refer students to a wide variety of resources.

> *"Having L & S advising available was very convenient. It is often hard to get an appointment at Campbell Hall, so meeting with advisors through the Academic Center is great!"*

Courses, Seminars, and Workshops. Each semester the Academic Program Coordinators recruit regularly-offered campus courses to be held in the Academic Center classrooms for unit residents. The courses fall into three main categories: freshman/sophomore seminars, discussion sections of large lecture courses, and adjunct courses.

Freshman/sophomore seminars are small courses (usually 15-24 students) taught by tenured faculty. The thirteen seminars offered in the Academic Centers in Fall 1992 covered a broad range of topics, including courses from the departments of Peace and Conflict Studies, Business Administration, and City and Regional Planning.

A course similar to a freshman seminar but not taught by tenured faculty is a two-unit study skills course aimed at easing the transition from high school to university. It covers not only study skills but also campus resources and life skills such as time management and stress reduction. The APCs and other Residential Programs staff teach these courses along with graduate student instructors from the School of Education.

Since it is nearly impossible for freshmen to avoid taking large lecture courses their first year, the Academic Centers try to personalize this experience by offering discussion sections for these courses in the Academic Center classrooms. Past offerings have included sections of introductory anthropology and political science courses taught by teaching assistants.

Adjunct courses are one- and two-unit courses offered in conjunction with large lecture courses. Students must be enrolled in the large lecture course to be eligible to take its adjunct, a course that focuses on study strategies, papers, and oral presentations tailored to the subject of the large lecture course. The campus Student Learning Center supervises this program and collaborates with the Academic Centers to hold two or three of these adjunct courses each semester in the residence halls.

Students unable to enroll in any of the courses scheduled through the Academic

Centers can still take advantage of a variety of academic skills workshops held in the evenings throughout the year. Workshop topics cover a variety of academic and study skills including note taking, time management, and exam preparation; they are presented by the APC or other academic support staff from campus.

> *"I love having this class taught in a residence hall. It makes the class less stressful, less formal, and closer to where I live."*

Faculty Involvement Programs. Providing students with opportunities to interact with their professors outside the classroom has been an integral component of the RLP since its inception. With no faculty living in-residence, outreach efforts are made to encourage faculty to visit the residence halls in a variety of structured and unstructured settings.

A vigorous attempt was recently undertaken to locate faculty interested in participating in residence hall programs. As a result, over 70 faculty are now part of a resource list used by the Academic Centers and the residence hall staff to organize events. Through the encouragement of the APCs, the residence hall staff has taken the lead in offering numerous, well-attended faculty involvement programs each semester, including faculty dinners and fireside chats.

The APCs organize several faculty involvement programs that are open to residents of all six complexes. The Last Lecture Series is a monthly event that rotates through the residence halls in which professors give a lecture as if it were the last one they will ever give. Another system-wide event is the VIP raffle (referred to by students as "The Ultimate Power Lunch") which allows residents to enter a drawing to win a free lunch at the faculty club with the Chancellor. One winning ticket from each of the six residence hall complexes is chosen. These and similar programs encourage faculty and students to meet informally outside of class.

> *"I thought the Last Lecture Series was really nice—it's good to see professors outside of a class—they have a lot of interesting things to say."*

Additional Services. Some programs do not fall neatly into the five components listed above but nonetheless deserve special mention. First, the Academic Centers have televisions and video cassette recorders which residents and hall staff can use on-site for educational purposes. The equipment is available at the Unit 3 Academic Center for viewing campus lectures, foreign language news broadcasts, and similar educational programs.

Second, each Academic Center contains numerous places for residents to study. Several lounges are comfortably arranged and reserved at all times for quiet study. For group study, residents can use group study rooms or the classrooms during non-class times. A small library is also available in each Center that contains reference materials, study skills guides, and free reading books.

Finally, the APCs encourage residents to form study groups in numerous ways. In individual appointments, peer advisors and the APCs suggest to residents how they can arrange their own study groups. In addition, tutors pass around study group signup sheets the first few weeks of each semester to aid residents in forming study groups. Also, a study group bulletin board is available on which residents can post a small card with their name, phone number, and a list of courses in which they are looking for a study partner. Residents who are interested in forming a study group simply call students who have posted a card, or they can post their own card.

Evaluation of the RLP: Successes and Challenges

In every sense of the word, the Academic Centers have been overwhelmingly successful. Each year has seen growth in both the

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number of students using the services and in the number of services available. In Spring 1992, Quality of Life Survey was administered (Stevens, 1992) to residents to determine their satisfaction with various aspects of residence hall life. Of the 55% of Unit 3 residents who returned the survey, 90% had used at least one Academic Center service. At the Foothill residential complex, from the 45% who responded, roughly 77% had used the Academic Center.

Statistics are kept on usage in each of the five program areas: tutoring, computers, advising, courses, and faculty programs. Tabulation of 1991-92 academic year data for both Academic Centers revealed the following successes (Dustin, 1991, 1992; Murchison 1991, 1992).

- Over 3,850 tutoring contacts were made.
- Residents used the two Computer Centers 18,091 times.
- Approximately half the residents used the Computer Centers at least once.
- Eight hundred forty-four advising contacts were made through 28 advising programs.
- Over 400 students attended Academic Center classes.
- At least 735 residents participated in faculty involvement programs during the Fall 1992 semester.

Subjective comments are also gathered each semester on surveys completed by residents who utilize the Academic Centers. A sample of quotes from these surveys appear throughout this chapter. In spite of these successes, challenges still remain for the RLP and the Academic Centers. Such challenges include collecting retention data, meeting the needs of a diverse student population, and offering more and better services with a diminishing budget.

Since the Academic Centers have been in operation for only three years, there are no data available on their impact on student retention and persistence towards graduation. However, even when the project enters its fourth and fifth years, it will be a challenge to collect such data. Simply counting the number of students who, as freshmen, lived in the units with Academic Centers and who then graduated is inadequate. How does one truly measure whether using Academic Center services and living in an academically integrated residence hall makes an impact on students' attitudes toward completing school? Is the answer found in simply counting up the number of contacts students had with the different components of the Academic Centers' services and correlating them with whether or not they stayed in school; or is there a more qualitative assessment that needs to be accomplished, perhaps through in-depth personal interviews? These and other challenges lie ahead for the Residential Learning Project as it matures and becomes institutionalized at UC Berkeley.

"I think the Academic Center is providing an invaluable service to residents!"

Another challenge facing the RLP is meeting the needs of a diverse student body. UC Berkeley is diverse not only in terms of race and ethnicity, but also in gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, political beliefs, and family status (Maslach, 1991). One goal of the RLP is to reflect such campus diversity in the Academic Centers' staffs.

In terms of ethnicity and gender, the Academic Centers have been very successful in accurately reflecting campus diversity in their overall staff of APCs, Tutors, Computer Coordinators, and Computer Monitors. Nonetheless, it has been a particular challenge to find women to tutor sciences and work as Computer Coordinators and to encourage African-Americans to work in the Computer Centers.

In terms of resident users, certain ethnic groups tend to utilize Academic Center services more often than others. Data from one Computer Center's users survey revealed the following (Office of Student Research, 1992; Cheng, Cheng, & Markenson, 1992).

Ethnicity	% Using Computer Center	Residents of Unit 3/ Foothill
American Indian	1%	1%
Asian/ Asian-Amer.	56%	39%
Black/ African-Amer.	3%	5%
White/ Caucasian	30%	28%
Hispanic/ Chicano/ Latino	5%	12%
No ethnic Data/ Other	4%	15%

These data clearly show that Asian-American students consistently used the Computer Center proportionately more than did other ethnic groups. Also, Hispanic students were underrepresented. Discussion has begun on how to encourage a more diverse population of residence hall students to use this service.

Another continuing challenge to the RLP, as well as to other programs on this campus and campuses across the nation, is attempting to offer more and better services with shrinking budgets. Even though academic services are in demand by all residents, particularly those living in units without Academic Centers, the ability for the two existing APCs to provide services to all 5,200 residents is limited. To meet the demand, Housing and Dining Services has reallocated some of its resources in order to provide more funding to the RLP. The outcome will be better academic services for all residents but at the expense of a decrease in other housing resources.

Directions for the Future

The Residential Learning Project is an important and integral part of making the the University of California at Berkeley campus a more welcoming and supportive environment for its undergraduates. Directions for the future of the Residential Learning Project include many exciting prospects.

Already in the planning and design stages is the expansion of Academic Center services to the residential complexes currently without them. The first addition to the RLP is a full Academic Center program for the residents of two residential units in Fall 1993. These services will be temporarily housed in renovated spaces within the residence halls until a permanent new building can be constructed. Within two years the one remaining residence hall complex should also have a fully functioning Academic Center. A task force has been working on the details of such a program for the past six months.

> *"In general, I really like the whole idea of the Academic Center and all that it involves — tutoring, advising, courses, the computer center, the quiet study area — I've used them all! THANKS!"*

In addition to providing the five core academic services at these new Academic Centers, additional programs are also part of our vision for the future. For example, the institutionalization of faculty involvement, including a faculty mentor program, is a goal that has been worked on sporadically but has been suppressed due to more urgent needs. This program would match interested faculty with a specific residence hall building or area. Expansion of campus cable television services, which includes broadcast of campus lectures and a foreign-language newscast channel, would be another welcome addition to all the residence units. And increasing the scope of a live-in peer advising program, currently in the pilot stage, would help to further address the needs of residents for easily available assistance in academic planning.

We also envision a Residential Learning Project that is fully integrated with other campus support units. Such collaboration would aid the Academic Centers in providing greater academic resources to residents and help in the collection of retention data. Campus-wide training of tutors and computer staff and the subsequent sharing of applicant pools and hiring guidelines are currently being explored.

Conclusion

All these future directions have one uniting purpose: to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience at the University of California at Berkeley, particularly for our first-year students. Due to the challenges students face at UC Berkeley, including an urban locale, large classes, and a diverse student body, the realization of this goal involves unique approaches. The Residential Learning Project is necessarily unlike the Residential College models in place at smaller and more rural institutions and must pursue creative solutions to the challenges of the freshman year.

> *"The [Academic] Center is a wonderful place, with wonderful people, and a wonderful atmosphere."*

By providing academic support services in the residence halls, the Residential Learning Project, through the Academic Centers, attempts to integrate students into the university environment and assist them in becoming more autonomous, comfortable, and resource learners in our richly diverse setting. The Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body (University of California, 1991) reported that ethnic minority students were especially supportive of academic skills services located in the residence halls. This is but one audience the RLP hopes to enrich. With continuation of the current momentum and campus and nationwide interest in the RLP, first-year students will experience a smooth transition to university life and understand what academic integration means at a multi-ethnic, richly diverse place such as Berkeley. They will truly, as the RLP motto states, "Live and Learn."

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Time Travel in British Higher Education: The Rediscovery of Colleges

Frank Burnet

11

The University of Kent at Canterbury was founded as part of the expansion of English Higher Education that took place in the mid-1960s. The aim of the expansion program was "to provide a place in Higher Education for all who had the necessary intellectual competence, motivation, and maturity to benefit from and who wished to do so" (Robbins, 1963, p. 7). Kent was one of six "New Universities" built on 200-acre green-field sites. Canterbury was chosen as one of these sites, both because it was an historical Cathedral City, home of the Church of England, and because there was no higher education institution in Kent.

Historical Background

For many people, even today, there are only two English universities: Oxford and Cambridge. Indeed, these are by far the oldest, being able to trace their roots back to 1170 and 1200, respectively, both beginning as groups of independent and separately endowed colleges.

The legal and financial independence of the "Oxbridge" colleges still exists to varying extents, and all have retained the right to admit their own students and appoint their own fellows. Both universities exist only as overarching administrative structures whose remit is limited to matters that involve the interaction between colleges. The most obvious examples are the provision of facilities like laboratories and arrangements for the examination of students from different colleges studying the same degree program (Tapper & Salter, 1992, p. 173).

The traditional role of Oxford and Cambridge was to provide religious instruction and general education for the sons of the aristocracy. They most commonly awarded pass degrees and taught a spectrum of subjects deemed correct accomplishments for godly gentlemen.

> *The traditional role of Oxford and Cambridge was to provide religious instruction and general education for the sons of the aristocracy.*

The dawn of the Industrial Revolution produced intense pressure for opportunities for specialized higher education designed to meet the scientific and engineering needs of manufacturing industry. "Oxbridge" was not designed to fulfill this roll, and new so-called "red brick" universities were built in the center of burgeoning industrial conurbations, the first being University College, London, founded in 1836, quickly followed by, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham, and Bristol.

None of these universities styled themselves as collegiate; all opted for a structure in which single subject departments taught and researched, using specialized facilities and methods. This approach arose naturally from the needs of science and technology and evolved at Oxbridge, as it too included these subject areas in its curriculum.

The outcome of these developments during the nineteenth century was that two very different types of student experience were available in England. The first was focused on a college—a multidisciplinary, but non-scientific, academic community in which lived and worked senior and junior members with widely varying academic interests and expertise. This environment is still frequently presented as the ideal breeding ground for that most European of ideals: "The Renaissance Man." The second experience was focused in a specialist department; it was perfectly possible, indeed in many instances encouraged, for students to have a full social and academic life without ever encountering anyone studying a different subject.

The dawn of the Industrial Revolution produced intense pressure for opportunities for specialized higher education designed to meet the scientific and engineering needs of manufacturing industry.

The New Universities

This historical divergence meant that, when entirely new universities were founded in the mid-1960s, the planners had to decide where between these two extremes to position themselves. In the University of Kent's case, the key role in making this strategic decision was given to Geoffrey Templeman, the founding Vice-Chancellor. He had spent most of his career as an academic and administrator at the red brick University of Birmingham but had also toured Australia and been impressed by the success with which some of their universities had adapted the collegiate principle. His hands were not entirely free, since the site had already been chosen and could hardly have been farther from any major center of industrial activity. Also, as another part of the same drive for expansion, a number of well-regarded colleges of advanced technology were being upgraded, renamed universities, and moved to purpose-built campuses. Under the circumstances, it was decided on a bias towards humanities and social sciences in Kent's subject mix. Indeed, the original list of major subject areas that the university proposed to teach bore a considerable resemblance to that offered by Oxbridge. This tipped the scales towards the adoption of the "Oxbridge" collegiate model, although physical and biological science was to be organized on a departmental basis. Such a move was seen as providing a distinctive character while minimizing the tyranny of departments and their professorial heads.

A collegiate structure was also seen as a way of eroding the traditional boundaries between academic disciplines. The first year of study was identified as crucial, and to this end elaborate schemes were devised that allowed first-year students a very wide choice of subjects and made the taking of subjects outside their main area of study compulsory. The aim was that each college would be "a microcosm of the whole university." Four colleges were planned as a first phase, with the possibility of another six being built later. Each college was to have 600 undergraduate members, approximately half of whom would be in residence. This number is larger than all but the biggest "Oxbridge" college but was calculated to be the smallest number that could support its own dining and social facilities.

Templeman was particularly keen to erode the 9-to-5 attitude he had observed at Birmingham, where residence halls were deserted during the day and academic space little used in the evenings. He viewed this as both an under-usage of valuable space and a missed opportunity to promote formation of peer groups with mixed academic interests.

The Design and Staffing of the Colleges

The next phase of the foundation was the crucial decision about what the colleges should look like. Extended skirmishes with architects followed, a major clash being between the designers' insistence on the wisdom of realizing the collegiate vision within buildings that could be used flexibly and Templeman's insistence on the creation of a unique layout custom-built literally to make concrete his concept of the ideal academic family. One of the senior architects involved later remarked, "No one had been given a brief like that since the Middle Ages."

Eventually, an acceptable design was devised by Anthony Wade, who had studied under Louis Kahn at the University of Pennsylvania and had been very impressed by Kahn's design for Bryn Mawr College. His proposal was based on four square blocks, each lined by corridors of study bedrooms with the center of each providing dining, social, or teaching space. He ingeniously joined these blocks by their corners to give a cruciform ground plan [see Fig. 1].

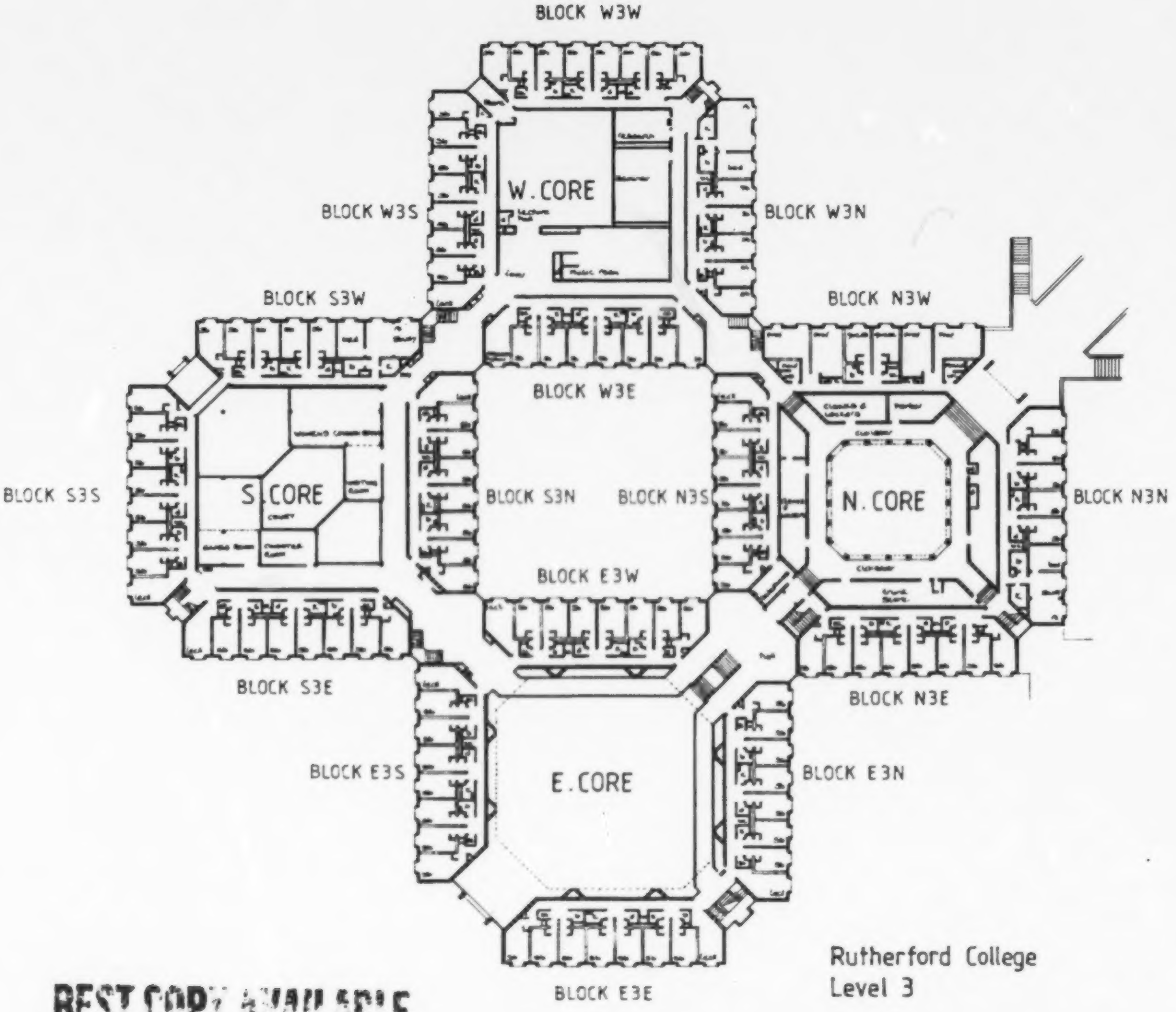
It was agreed to construct the first two colleges, later to be named Rutherford and Eliot, using this plan. The main objective was to bring about as high an extent of integration of social, residential, and academic space as possible. A particularly striking aspect of the room layout was that a teaching room, for use by a senior faculty member, was placed at the end of each corridor of study bedrooms [see Fig. 2]. This distributed academic staff evenly and thinly across the college.

The founding deans and masters, were, perhaps predictably, recruited from Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham, which also had a collegiate tradition. Kent adopted three features similar to those of Oxbridge: a tutorial system which placed importance on the tutor and tutee being members of the same college; an emphasis on the importance of eating together for creating a family identity; and continuously-manned Porters' Lodge, which acted in a combined security, reception, and pastoral role. Unlike Oxbridge, however, the colleges were given no role in the admissions process or the organization of teaching, and, crucially, they were not made financially independent of the university.

The Present

In 1990 the university commissioned a survey by an independent management consultant that was intended to focus on the role and responsibilities of its principal administrative officer, the registrar. In the event, it ranged much wider than this and triggered an evaluation of the successes and failures of the university's first 25 years. Meetings called to discuss the report identified several positive consequences of the college structure. First, they were popular with school leavers. Kent was consistently in the top three universities in the UK, when ranked on the basis of number of applicants per place. Furthermore, it was second only to London University in terms of percentages of full-time overseas and year-abroad students. This ability to maintain high levels of income from private sources was a major factor in insuring its financial viability in the face of cuts in public funding that it had experienced almost from the inaugural year.

Secondly, multidisciplinary aspects had also proved attractive to students, particularly in the humanities, whose subject areas were almost entirely college-based. In this faculty approximately 250 subject combinations were possible, and the longest degree title in 1990 was "Classical Civilization and The-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Rutherford College
Level 3

Figure 1

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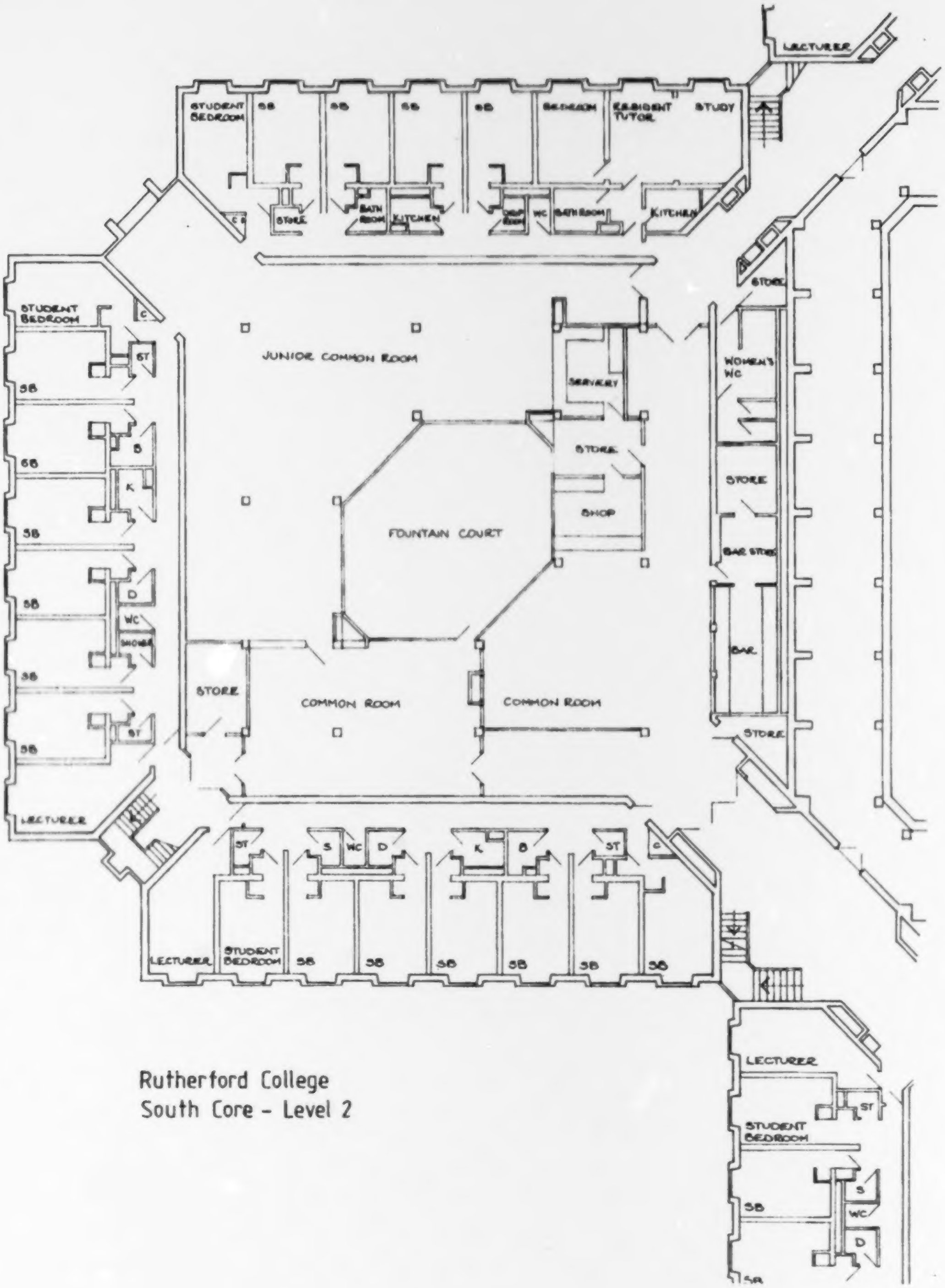
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WOMEN'S WC
STORE
BAR STORE
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Rutherford College
South Core - Level 2

Figure 2

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ology and Religious Studies with Comparative Literary Studies."

Finally, the original cohort of staff recruited to Kent were attracted by its college credo. This continued to be attractive to many staff because it had indeed insulated them from being treated as a group of subject specialists under the direction of all-powerful professors.

A recent example of staff loyalty to their college has been the strong resistance put up by teachers of languages to moving into a custom-built language building. However, it must also be added that other groups, such as the lawyers, have argued vociferously that they should be housed in a single building rather than distributed among colleges.

In fact, it would seem that departments can have attitudes anywhere along a spectrum, at one end of which they view themselves as a group of gifted individuals who benefit only from meeting each other at infrequent intervals and at the other they see themselves as a team whose efficient operation is badly compromised by not sharing the same premises. The latter groups tend to be in subjects with vocational biases while the former are more often in the humanities. The report also noted the high levels of loyalty (and consequently low levels of industrial unrest) because of the positive attitudes of ancillary staff to "their" college, even though all of them, with the important exception of the porters, were managed from outside the college.

The colleges already offer first-year students a number of crucial levels of support.

Negative outcomes were also suggested. The most frequently cited was that the college structure tended to insulate staff from interaction with those with whom they share responsibility for teaching and research. This fragmentation of subjects had led to pressure from some departments to allow them to concentrate in particular colleges. This has been permitted for small departments, but the masters had been of the unanimous view that concentration of larger departments would imbalance the mix of disciplines represented.

A second major problem has been operating costs, particularly of dining. This has a long history, dating from the original decision that it was essential for each college to have its own dining hall. This decision was itself based on projections of the scale of use of dining facilities that could not be maintained, after strict rules relating to residence were relaxed in the face of vociferous protest from the first cohorts of students.

Successive funding crises have led to both reductions in services offered and a decrease in college autonomy. Originally every college had a bursar—a manager of the college's services— responsible to the master, but these were abolished in 1976 and a central management structure was established. This change created an uneasy relationship between an increasingly centralized administration (or Kremlin, as it soon came to be described) and the College Masters, who wished to preserve their independence.

Finally, the pressure to increase student numbers had created new problems, since building extra colleges had been seen as an unrealistically expensive option. This meant that the numbers of students associated with each college rose steeply and exceeded the number that could be realistically molded into a cohesive community.

The Future: A College for Mature and Part-Time Students

So much for the past. The challenge that faces the university is to find ways of capitalizing on its collegiate identity. This means both reinforcing old purposes and seeking new ones suited to the rapidly evolving role of higher education institutions in the UK.

The colleges already offer first-year students a number of crucial levels of support. First-year students get absolute priority in the al-location of the colleges' study bedrooms, and their corridor becomes their first opportunity to create their own networks and self-help groups. Undergraduates organize a "freshers' week," are present in numbers to welcome new students, and provide information and support. They also organize an intensive social program that insures that very few freshmen lack opportunities to settle and make connections. Additionally, college tutors bring together first-year tutees and encourage a supportive environment that assists individuals to build their personal confidence.

> *The college is also giving priority to finding space to house learning facilities that enable students to work at their own pace and fill gaps in their knowledge.*

New developments and thinking have focused on a plan that is now being gradually implemented to capitalize on the unique characteristics of colleges to provide moral and logistical support for the increasing numbers of first-year students who are not entering the university directly from school or who are opting to study part-time. This fits well with the university's strategic plan that includes a commitment to create more flexible degree programs facilitated by new credit accumulation and transfer frameworks. This can be achieved by using the college to concentrate full- and part-time staff with expertise in working with mature students and by providing a base for liaison with teachers involved in the preparation of adults for higher education (e.g., local tutors for the Open University), building bridges between the university and its feeder colleges that reduce the shock of crossing between two different learning environments.

The college is also giving priority to finding space to house learning facilities that enable students to work at their own pace and fill gaps in their knowledge. A learning resource center specializing in providing self-paced learning tapes/videos/texts is planned. In addition, there is a need for workshop facilities that are known to benefit non-traditional students in such subjects as mathematics. A recent innovation has been to designate one room in the college as a communal study area, a response to a need for a space in which small groups of students can work together without distracting other learners.

Finally, there is a need to enable students to socialize with staff and their peers. This will be achieved by creating study/social areas containing limited office facilities (photocopier, telephone) and quiet rooms designed for private study and discussion. Ideally this area should also incorporate a vending facility that is available in the evenings. To summarize, a combination of the Canterbury location and colleges has created an institution whose ambiance is attractive to students. The challenge is to adapt this model to meet the need for mass higher education in the UK while preserving its distinctive characteristics and strengths.

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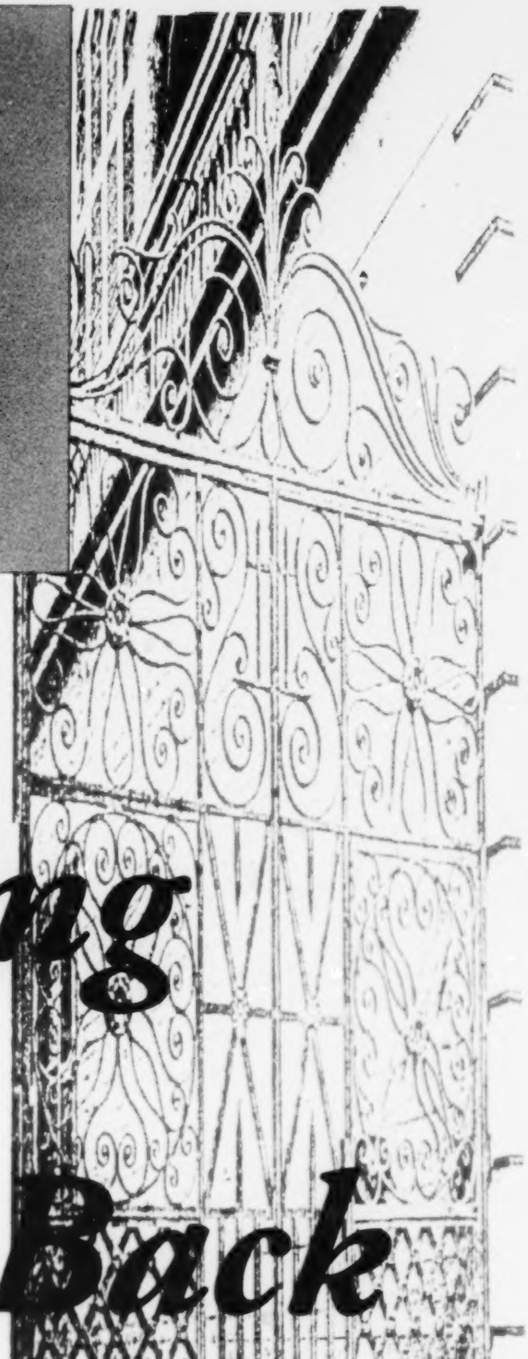
Part Three:

Looking Back



How to Know When It's Working

Kristie DiGregorio

Mary MacManus Ramsbottom

Carl Trindle

12

Introduction

A political science professor at the University of Virginia, to the wonderment of many, produces buttons and banners proclaiming that "Politics is a Good Thing." Likewise, A Residential College is a Good Thing. But even the political scientist must acknowledge that the potential for good is sometimes imperfectly expressed in practice. It is worth taking the trouble to imagine the ideal and to come to judgment on how particular realizations of a noble goal have fallen short. On this basis, of course, it becomes possible to approach that ideal more nearly.

Evaluation of a residential college system and its impact on first-year students is a worthwhile exercise not only in the abstract. It is inevitable that a particular realization will be judged by its members, affiliates, and supervisors. They will have in mind alternatives that might be cheaper, more convenient, or closer to pursuing a different ideal. It is therefore imperative to take some degree of control of the evaluation. Hopefully, this chapter will provide guidance toward the aim of making evaluation as fair and constructive as possible. Evaluation is not necessarily a threat. It can rekindle enthusiasm for the venture; it can clearly identify just what new (or re-allocated) resources are needed to make a real difference; it can convince the skeptical to commit wholeheartedly to the endeavor.

Beforehand

One of the ways to control the outcome of the evaluation is to choose the evaluators. Obviously, choosing anyone known to be hostile to the residential college idea is foolhardy. Yet the evaluators must be able to assume the mask of impartiality and must not overlook flaws. They must have some expertise, if not fame, to assure that their remarks can be taken seriously. But it must be the case that their value will be based more on coherence of their report and validity of their recommendations than on their reputation.

> *Evaluation is not necessarily a threat. It can rekindle enthusiasm for the venture . . . it can convince the skeptical to commit wholeheartedly to the endeavor.*

How many visitors make a team? One person can do the job, and at low cost. But a larger number makes several points of view possible, and one member's occasional misconception can be corrected. Details that might escape any one visitor might be snared by another. Three members may be an optimum size; the odd number assures a majority opinion, and three are still not so hopelessly unwieldy that a timely report is impossible.

Prepare the visitors. Written materials may well be the first impression the evaluation team will have of the college. Assume the visitors are ignorant of details that have become as basic and familiar as the rising of the sun each day. These aliens have no conception. They are more removed than the most dazed and distracted incoming members. They do not even know where the building is. Inform the evaluation team in advance of the history of the college, its rationale and structure, both physical and administrative. Provide some numbers: membership, staff, budget. Tell something of the whole institution; on their behalf, collect not only samples of information publicly available (Peterson's Guide entries, etc.) but some information intended for internal study as well. Include a description of the aims and values of the school. Tell them the facts and the wishes: how far, and in what direction, lies the future? Be sure they know what the burning issues are and what you want.

Since the college has a role to play in the critical and stormy first year, be sure the visitors know what their role is intended to be. Their questions will bear on demography, impact, and commitment.

Demography—why is the college composed mostly of first-year students? Or, why are beginning and veteran students mixed? If only some entering students are housed in the college(s), why is that? How are college members chosen? Impact—what does the residential college do for its first-year members that other lodgings do not? What is the evidence? What needs to be changed or improved? Commitment—does the institution provide survival support for first-year students? Is this considered (by faculty, student affairs staff, or the higher administration) a necessary evil, a diversion of resources better applied elsewhere? Or is this considered one of the primary responsibilities? How does the college fit; is it a way of meeting the primary responsibility? Does it have the financial and staff support consistent with its charge?

Prepare the ground. Locate the people who have a tale to tell and make sure they are ready to tell it. Perhaps a low-key self-study is worthwhile to identify the people the visitors must know and to prepare replies for some of the inevitable questions the visitors must ask.

On the Site

Open the college to the visitors, allowing them the chance to hear all the voices of all those with interest in the system. It always is a surprise how many people have a legitimate interest in the operation of the college.

Students will know things others can never tell the visitors; they know the least formal reputations, the gossip, the scuttlebutt. Residents will have one story to tell, nonresidents another. Students with responsibilities - resident staff - will give yet another brushstroke to the portrait.

Students will talk to the visitors; indeed, they will be flattered to think that their voice counts for something. They should be allowed to have their say only with the evaluators. The temptation to be present should be resisted; the visitors will pass on what is learned.

Faculty may be charged with some responsibility for the operation of the college, may be affiliates, or may have no connection with the operation at all. With the broadest responsibility come attendant cares and preoccupations. The director and the day-to-day supervisor of the college must speak freely, as well as those with lesser responsibility.

Resource managers will, of course, take a cooler view of any endeavor that calls on their resources and adds to their burdens. It cannot be denied that the college will call for the attention of almost every university operations officer, in ways that more familiar housing does not. Department chairs wonder what their faculty are up to and, if they are devoted to the college, whether they will grow professionally and contribute fairly to the academic department. The academic and career advising effort can be assisted in the colleges but generally must revise its procedures in ways that may be inconvenient. Student affairs officers will be interested in the quality of student life and the provision of personal counseling in the college setting. The college will be of concern to the chief academic officer as a call on the academic resources of the school; if the college involves unusual costs of staffing or amenities, the financial officer must take notice of this. The director of the physical plant has a legitimate interest in the treatment of the buildings and grounds.

The powers that be, the president (and staff) or other high officials, may be able to convey to the visitors whether the residential colleges enjoy that inestimable asset of any academic program, support from the top. If generally free of any detailed knowledge or commitment, they will still have a leader's sense of where the institution is going. Among this group, it is critical to find the one or two people with direct responsibility for the well-being of first-year students.

This extended list, which translates into exhausting days of interviews, not to mention a scheduling nightmare for the host, is not exhaustive. The admissions officer, the development officer, the surrounding community, the overall student governance, perhaps still others will have views worth attention. The organizer of the visit can hardly deny anyone the opportunity to make his or her opinions known to the visitors. On the other hand, as the flood rises, the visitors will have increasing difficulty sorting out who cares, in what way, and about what.

There is a short list of icebreaking but nonetheless blunt questions that elicits not only a comfort level between interviewer and interviewee but also vital background information about the college:

> What has given you satisfaction about this job? What annoys you unmercifully? What obligations do you have juggle? Whom must you please? How can you make time for it? What do your friends (colleagues) think of it? What could make your work easier or more productive? Can you imagine doing this work for another five years? If so: What would keep you with it? What would have to change?

Once a rapport is established, then questions that permit the evaluators to make judgements about program efficacy may be asked:

> How pervasive is your institution's commitment to your college? What is the relationship between student and academic affairs as it affects your college? How do you routinely evaluate your college? Do residents believe their experiences are different from those not living in the college? Do residents identify with their college? How do residents contribute to the life and growth of the college?

One of the first concerns is to detect any hint of serious difficulty. These danger signals are not uncommon in any academic enterprise, unhappily. But fledgling innovations, generally delicate in health, are particularly vulnerable to these weaknesses. On the list below, perhaps the last weakness is most nearly fatal and needs most urgent correction:

- The college is on trial and must prove itself, soon.
- The college is understaffed, undercapitalized.

- The leaders are overworked, without commensurate reward.
- The college is envied, resented.
- The college is an orphan, no one's central responsibility.

The Report

Purely practical considerations. The single persistent trace of the visit is the report. This is what has been paid for. Evoke a constructive report. From conversation, there will be an impression whether the visitors are impressed, horrified, or (perhaps worst) indifferent. If the impression is not pronounced, a preliminary reaction should be sought, helping advise the visitors of details of their report.

The single persistent trace of the visit is the report. This is what has been paid for.

Guidance on the organization and presentation of the visitors' report will be welcome: who will read an executive summary, who will search out details, what sort of recommendations are likely to be acted upon and what kind must be evaded. Is wide distribution of the report intended . . . with or without editing? Will only parts be made available to those with special interests? Is it more convenient to publish a brief summary, with details available? The writers need to know.

A prompt report must be insisted upon. Because this effort is likely to fail, be prepared to renew the petition.

The report should be seen before it is widely disseminated. It may have some surprises. After making appropriate queries about any unexpected observations, the report, or portions, should be distributed to everyone involved in the visit and their reaction seriously solicited.

Content and point of view. Assuming the widest possible readership for the report, it should have three major components: a description of the current structure, ideals, and practice of the college, including the tasks of the central characters; an elucidation of strengths of the current arrangements, trouble spots, and general approaches to improvement; and a narrative of a variety of concrete and easy measures for improvement of the operation.

It is important to give praise where it is due and to express sympathy for hard work under trying circumstances. It is good to encourage the patient and persistent pursuit of tasks that, by nature, are not completed in a few months or years and to avoid large promises. It is most urgent to leaven the type of judgment that is natural in the assessment of business practice (i.e., an economic-utilitarian or "corporate" valuation) with one in which value is seen in obedience to principle.

Bases for Judging the College

Utilitarian. Is the college "worth it?" In a time when financial support for academic endeavor is dwindling, yet higher and higher obligations are being placed on colleges and universities, it is essential to be able to make a utilitarian case for residential colleges. The measures noted in the chart below are primarily statistical in nature and lend themselves to arguments familiar in form to governing boards. It would be hard to arrive at the conclusion that residential colleges are justified if these statistical measures suggest that colleges are destructive to the mission of the school.

Outcome:
Improved public image.
Evidence:
Fewer community complaints.

Outcome:
More applications for admission and transfer.
Evidence:
More contributions from alumni.

Outcome:
Enhanced retention.
Evidence:
Student numbers.

Outcome:
Decreased vandalism.
Evidence:
Lower maintenance bills.

Outcome:
Improved academic work.
Evidence:
Higher grade distribution; lower incidence of academic suspension, etc.

Outcome:
Enhanced level of "civility".
Evidence:
Decline in incidents of hate speech and actions, insults.

Outcome:
Improved morale of residents.
Evidence:
Higher application and renewal rates; active college calendar.

Outcome:
Improved performance of academic advising and personal counseling staff.
Evidence:
Increased traffic at early stages of academic, behavioral, and personal problems.

Communitarianism. Does the college express an institutional ethos and a means to initiate the stranger? It is particularly urgent for first-year students, most of whom are breaking away from a familiar, generally comfortable and supportive home, to find its counterpart in the college. Part of what makes the home meaningful is the strong sense of shared experience, tradition, and point of view. Members of the family are in profound agreement on a variety of important issues. Successful institutions have common ground as well: a general mission which may be to foster advances in scholarship, to express an ethical-religious orientation, to develop a sense of duty and service, or to prepare members for creditable work in any of a variety of callings. New members of the community prosper when they come to recognize and subscribe to the ideals embodied in the practice of the institution.

It is partly the responsibility of the college to ease this process. Does the daily life of the college help newcomers to an understanding of the school's ethos? Of course—new members are eager for the slightest clues. At the University of Virginia, four weeks in dormitories is enough for first-year students to realize that social life requires alcohol; Mr. Jefferson is a touchstone in debate; an over-busy schedule is more laudable than one which allows time to be taken for reflection; studies are valuable if they lead to good jobs; and one must choose solidarity with an ethnic group. First-year students learn many such things that are objectively not so. The colleges can improve the quality of the indoctrination by widening its members' acquaintance with the history of the school; the generally unknown surrounding of the campus; a variety of academic and other services, programs, and people; unfamiliar ideas and points of view; and generally bringing their students to be more at home in the community. Evaluators of a college should be alert for evidence of activities, organized and informal that lead to this acculturation.

Principledness. Is the college making a "good society?" The features listed in the chart below are aspects of a community devoted to the life of the mind and the development of youth. These qualities can make the university one of the very best places to be. In an evaluation of a residential college, the presence of events such as those listed should be ascertained, applauded, and encouraged.

Listening to staff, faculty affiliates, and students in residential colleges should establish that the sense of collaboration between students and faculty is the critical variable. College members are generally better off than those living off-campus, without programming or faculty contact, and also those living with fraternities and sororities with primarily social programming and lacking faculty contact. College members are even better off than those living in university lodgings with modest social and developmental programming, generally left in the hands of student affairs professionals. In residential colleges, communitarianism and principledness can be measured by the following list of Desiderata and Hints:

Desideratum:
Informal exchange between faculty and students.
Hint:
Presence of faculty at the college.

Desideratum:
Open and serious discussion of difficult questions.
Hint:
The events themselves, organized and not.

Desideratum:
Academic innovation.
Hints:
Invention and participation.

Desideratum:
Enriched cultural life.
Hint:
Events on college calendar.

Desideratum:
Altruistic and philanthropic efforts devoted to such work.
Hints:
Activity leaders and groups.

Desideratum:
Friendly non-exclusive atmosphere.
Hint:
Members spend spare time together.

Desideratum:
Mutual care and responsibility.
Hint:
Anecdotes.

Desideratum:
Serious regard for academic work.
Hints:
Conscientious and industrious work in classes; spontaneous and enthusiastic discussion of readings and investigations, by both students and faculty.

That is the happy state toward which residential college practitioners work. The evaluation, if it is to be useful at all, must move a program toward that goal.

When possible, experimental designs should augment qualitative research. In true experimental designs, students are randomly assigned to the residential college and compared to a control group. Because experimental designs are very rigorous, the results of such research will be highly persuasive to the wary observer. However, since random assignment of students is often impossible, the evaluation team may select one of the many quasi-experimental designs which, by definition, do not require randomization. Of course, the data from both experimental and quasi-experimental designs should be augmented by qualitative research.

Using the Report

If the visitors have cooperated and there is a detachable summary-and-recommendations, it should be made available to everyone who took part in the visit, with thanks and a note how they influenced the report. All praise should be relayed to the persons praised in the report and their supervisors . . . especially to those who are thorns in the side. Small items that cost little should be done quickly, more major actions assigned, emergencies responded to with alacrity. If the visitors have spotted real danger, a remedy should be sought and allies enlisted. Finally, the team should be told what is being done. Nothing is more gratifying than being asked for advice, unless it is that the advice is taken.

The Longer Term

No one would wish to go through the ordeal of evaluation very often. It is well to extract the greatest advantage from each infrequent visit. But the useful life of any evaluation report is not very long for two reasons. Of course, the judgment was made at a particular point in time; things change. But the more important reason is that often the recommendations of the report are filed away and forgotten.

This report purchased at such a price deserves one disinterment, either for congratulations for accepting the wise and discarding the foolish or for deriving just a bit more benefit from the effort. The look backward might give some satisfaction in how far the program has come.

Amy's College

MARTIN NEMKO

13

Here is what I wish for my daughter Amy as she enrolls in a residential college:

At Amy's college, returning students volunteer to serve as "big sisters/brothers." At orientation, each big sister finds her little sister, welcomes her warmly, and begins a mentoring relationship that lasts through her entire freshman year. As Amy first walks into her residential college, she is met at the front door by an Oxbridge-style porter, a combination door person/concierge, who is a retired university staff member. Amy also soon meets the cleaning person, who explains that she loves talking with students and to keep her in mind if Amy ever wants a friendly ear. (All the housekeepers in the residential college receive training in human relations—perhaps the first time in many housekeepers' lives that they are told that they are important to the lives of others.) The next person of note she meets is the visiting dignitary who is staying in the guest suite reserved for just that purpose. Next, Amy meets the 15 students in her "College Family"—the students who live closest to her. Their first task in the residential college is to paint a mural on a nearby hall wall under the guidance of an art professor. Amy's next task involves the networked computer in her room. The screen has brief descriptions of the following: the five most successful residential college events of the past year, one-paragraph proposals made by faculty for academically-grounded co-curricular programs, student ideas for co-curricular programs, and a list of the cultural events to occur on campus that semester. All students indicate, on the computer, their degree of interest in participating in each of the activities. This gives faculty an estimate of the number of students likely to attend their session before committing to the work in preparing it. Also, it allows for a policy that requires residents and perhaps affiliated faculty to attend the top five vote-getting cultural activities as a group.

The activities from which Amy is able to choose from include:

"Create-a-Course." A professor invites students to help her develop a new course. For example, she might say, "I want to develop

a new course on women's and men's ways of knowing. The course will focus on five themes, and I want students to help determine how those themes should be explored: what readings, what classroom and out-of-class activities, what movies, etc." One or two students would volunteer to flesh out each theme.

[T]he well-organized lecture is a fine spice, but only one spice on a whole rack filled with active learning approaches like simulations, case studies, and cooperative learning.

"Debates." Students plan debates on topics like affirmative action. After the debate, all attending students pair off to discuss it. (General programming principle: where possible, events should include an activity in which students self-select in pairs. This capitalizes on a key student motivator: hormones.)

"Sunday with the Times." A stack of *New York Times*, bagels, and coffee are set by the fire, and students, perhaps with a faculty leader, simply read the *Times* and upon discovering something exciting, annoying, or puzzling speak up. For example, "Can you believe that the immigrant population in California has increased 50% in the last decade alone?"

"The Talking Professor." College-affiliated faculty give such talks as, "My Autobiography—How I Came To Be a Physics Professor," "My Last Lecture," and "My Secret Passion." A professor reads and discusses his favorite children's book. A professor speaks of her passion for bridge and gives introductory lessons.

All students eat each meal together or at least have one or more tables in the dining room set aside for them, demarcated by a tablecloth and the college's name and crest. All students in the college know that every evening at a prescribed time, dinner begins. Students are told the benefits of dining together regularly and that it replicates the practice started at Oxford and Cambridge and subsequently adopted at Harvard and Yale.

Amy is required to join a "Federated Learning Community," a concept developed at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. On a given theme the faculty advisor selects three courses that bridge the theme, from among all general education courses, all taught by good instructors. Fifteen slots (the number of students that constitute an ideal class size for a discussion) in each class are reserved for students in the college. Interested students preregister as a group for this cluster of classes. Joining these 15 students is a master learner, a faculty member on sabbatical, emeritus, or graduate student who takes the cluster of courses and, once a week, leads a seminar for the 15 students. This seminar relates the content of the clustered courses to the interdisciplinary theme.

The fantasy concludes with Amy, of course, loving her experience in the residential college, and after graduation, staying active in the college alumni association. Amy, now very successful, happy, and wealthy, decides to repay her debt to her college by endowing it; henceforth its new name: Amy Nemko College.

As good as this might sound, even this does not make undergraduate education worth the four to six years and the thousands of dollars of money that 2.2 million new students spend on college each year.

We need bolder changes. Institutions of higher education, especially the mega state universities and large privates, are immoral in proclaiming that they provide quality undergraduate education. For the most part, they provide an assembly-line education dispensed by persons ill-suited to and ill-trained for the task.

At Marty Nemko University, every doctoral student is required to take a course in pedagogy, and more importantly, to demonstrate competence in teaching before receiving a Ph.D. Frighteningly few faculty know even the basics of pedagogy; for example, that after a student is called on, many classmates' brains click off, knowing they will not be called upon. So, to give everyone a chance to think about the question, an instructor should wait a few seconds after asking a question before calling on a student. The pedagogy class also teaches people that the well-organized lecture is a fine spice, but only one spice on a whole rack filled with active learning approaches like simulations, case studies, and cooperative learning.

It is absurd to put freshmen in barn-sized classes at the time they most need the nurturing of small-group instruction. Excellent undergraduate education reduces to one word—relationships.

At Marty Nemko University, the teaching capabilities of all prospective undergraduate faculty are reviewed more carefully than their research. Each candidate is required to submit a teaching portfolio consisting of previous course syllabi, videotapes of teaching a lower-division and upper-division class, a statement of their philosophy of pedagogy, and unedited student evaluations.

At Marty Nemko University, the curriculum is front-loaded; students take their smallest classes as freshmen. It is absurd to put freshmen in barn-sized classes at the time they most need the nurturing of small-group instruction.

Excellent undergraduate education reduces to one word—relationships. So, Marty Nemko University offers many personalizing experiences, especially for freshmen. Of course there are the relationships in the residential college: the big brother/sister, the porter, housekeeper, peer advisors, "College Family" leader, and resident assistant. There are also undergraduate research opportunities and a catalog of all faculty members seeking students to work as research assistants. Each listing describes the faculty member, includes a picture, and describes the research project and the work desired of the assistant.

At Marty Nemko University, the definition of scholarship in promotion and tenure is broadened along the lines suggested by Ernest Boyer and by the faculty union contract in Minnesota. All faculty agree to a three-year contract in which he or she determines the criteria for evaluation. And scholarship is encouraged to include scholarship related to teaching. For example, a faculty member makes a powerful contribution by developing a method for teaching the ten key physics concepts that even poets should understand, taught in such a way that these ten concepts become part of each student's intellectual fabric. What a wonderful alternative to the traditional Physics for Poets course in which students must plow through a 700 page textbook, "learn" just enough to get past the final, and not one bit more nor one day longer.

At Marty Nemko University, every syllabus is reviewed by the department chair to discourage the tyranny of content. Today, many faculty believe a course is rigorous only if they assign 1000 pages of reading and teach largely via the lecture method—the approach that crams the most content per class minute. We must be leaders of learning rather than conveyers of information.

We must be leaders of learning rather than conveyers of information.

At Marty Nemko University, men (students, faculty, administration, and staff) are encouraged to respect and encourage "women's ways of knowing"—the collegial, cooperative model of interaction and problem solving. Conversely, women are encouraged to respect and encourage that which the stereotypical man brings to the table—the competitive and goal-oriented. There is legitimacy to many males' objection to the au cou-

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rant phrase, "men just don't get it." Many women's studies folks believe that the "women's way of knowing" is the best way. But the best comes from an integration of what both men and women bring to the table.

Finally, at Marty Nemko University, each student has a capstone experience to bridge the gap between academe and the real world. This includes career counseling: how each student's skills, interests, and values can be amalgamated into a career goal.

And at Marty Nemko University, all programs, even those as good as its residential college, are evaluated carefully. The model used is rigorous enough to satisfy the bean counters and quantitative methodologists, yet soft enough to pick up the crucial outcomes of residential colleges that quantitative measures are probably too insensitive to pick up.

In this model, a control group is established, perhaps by taking 15 students who were marginally rejected from the residential college. The experimental group is 15 students who were marginally accepted into the residential college. At entrance, hard data are collected on each group; e.g., high school grade-point average adjusted for rigor of courses taken, S.A.T. or A.C.T. scores, and extracurricular depth. (A student has good extracurricular depth, if, for example, as a high school sophomore, she wrote an occasional article for the student newspaper; as a junior, she became managing editor; and as a senior, started an underground newspaper.)

Beginning at orientation, each student is interviewed monthly about his or her experiences in the residential college. Students in the control group are asked about their residence hall and other co-curricular experiences. The questionnaire is designed by a researcher (perhaps an ethnographer who is well respected on campus but is somewhat skeptical about the program) in collaboration with college students. A typical line of questioning is, "How many interactions did you have with residential college faculty this month? Describe the most meaningful? How did you benefit from the interaction? What facilitated that being a helpful interaction? What could the faculty member or you have done differently that would have made for a more successful interaction?" The students are followed longitudinally, continuing after college graduation. Finally, the researcher analyzes the data, writes the evaluation, and perhaps even publishes it.

It is high time for a kinder, gentler approach to undergraduate education. Undergraduate education's guiding principle should be: "What would we do if we really loved our students?" Those words should be a part of every undergraduate institution's mission statement and be hung on the walls and burnished in the mind of every employee of the institution. Of course, it is much easier to call for these changes than to implement them. The only person who likes change is a wet baby. And in these troubled times, it is easy to get frustrated and cynical even just trying to make the status quo work.

The following story may be a useful antidote to frustration and cynicism. A cynical man was on a beach and noticed that running along the beach was a jogger doing something strange: every so often, the jogger would stop, pick something up, and throw it in the water, jog some more, pick something up, and throw it in the water. The cynical man was curious so he stopped the jogger and asked, "Would you mind telling me what you're doing?" The jogger replied, "Sure. Every time I see a starfish washed ashore, I pick it up and throw him back in the water." The cynical man responded, "But don't you realize that there are hundreds of starfish on this beach alone, and there are hundreds of miles of beach on this coast alone. What possible difference can you make?" And the jogger looked into his hand and said, "To him, a very big difference."

Afterword: Three Quotes

TERRY B. SMITH

14

Bill Clinton waged a victorious political campaign in 1992 by heeding the advice posted prominently in his Little Rock campaign headquarters: "It's the economy, stupid." I advise residential college practitioners to post a sign in their headquarters: "It's academics, stupid." If the core activity of the institution—student academic achievement—is also the core of the residential college program, then the college will work. If something else is the core of the residential college program, then the college will be fated to struggle for legitimacy, credibility, and ultimately its existence. It's academics, stupid.

Once it is established that IT IS ACADEMICS, then the subtlety and nuance of living/learning begins to flower.

> There must be a richer experience for students at the university than to be left entirely to their own devices, and [there must be] rewards for all in conversation across the gulf of age and habit. The cultivation of common ground is significant educational enterprise. In the process we might see signs of the value of the work; a higher level of civilized behavior; greater interest in intellectual work; a greater degree of engagement in the university's wealth of cultural variety; more effective guidance of youth; and deeper respect and sympathy on all sides. (Monroe Hill College, 1991, p. 3)

Have nicer words been written about why we are in the higher education business? Empathy, self-discipline, multicultural perspective, studious reflection—and residential colleges can empower these traits perhaps better than any other program on our campuses. And to be able to do this for students who are just starting undergraduate education . . . .

The editor's college-age children accompanied him on a visit to Canterbury, England and to the University of Kent's Rutherford College, so engagingly described in Chapter Eleven by Master Frank Burnet. After spending a day on the campus talking with college members, the editor's daughter observed: "They sure do cherish their students here, don't they?"

"Cherishing" is the sublime charge to residential colleges: empowering students and giving special care explicitly in the context of the academic mission of the institution. And, for first-year students, residential colleges offer an ideal educational experience.

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